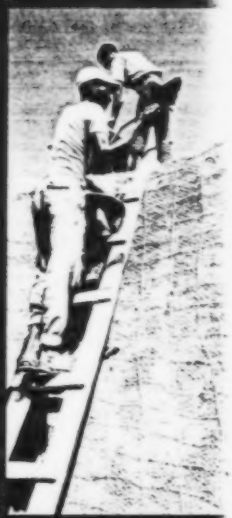
United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on AFRICA



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Friday, 15 March 1996

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System-wide
Special Initiative
on AFRICA

Questions and Answers

What is the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa?

Led by the entire UN system, the Special Initiative is an unprecedented set of concrete and coordinated actions designed to maximize support for African development efforts. It begins with a year-long political mobilization campaign to raise Africa's priority status on the international agenda and to provide a new stimulus to African development. This Initiative is historic because, for the first time, the UN system has committed itself to working in a synergistic manner to support the development of a continent's people.

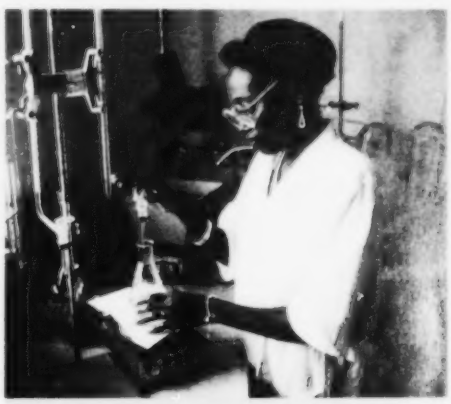
What are the objectives of the Special Initiative?

The Special Initiative's objectives are to add momentum to Africa's development at a time when prospects for economic recovery are greater than they have been in recent years. Many African countries are creating an enabling environment of accountability and better governance. Growth rates are picking up and conditions for investment and production are improving rapidly for local and foreign entrepreneurs. These are all positive indicators for accelerating development efforts.

The Initiative will strengthen the capacity of African men and women to take charge of the development process and promote the minimum conditions for civil tranquillity, good governance and socio-economic progress in order to give development a chance. It will also seek to give more hope to upcoming generations through the provision of better education, health care and employment opportunities.

What are the main components of the Special Initiative?

The Special Initiative has 14 components concentrated in the following sectors: basic education, basic health, governance, food security, water and sanitation, peace-building and informatics. To facilitate implementation of these components, innovative ways to improve development cooperation and increase aid effectiveness have been devised.



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How much will the Special Initiative cost and where will the money come from?

Up to $25 billion will be required to finance the Special Initiative over a 10-year period. Financing will come mainly from a redirection of existing resources at national and international levels, as well as from new resources. The exact mix will be determined through a series of consultations at the regional and national levels.

The Initiative proposes three mechanisms for resource mobilization. First, multilateral and bilateral donors are to create goal-oriented regional forums to raise resources for key sectors. Second, African governments are to prepare goal-oriented country investment programmes to maximize the impact of

internal and external resource mobilization. Third, participation in Consultative Group and Roundtable meetings is to be broadened to encourage involvement and participation of non-traditional partners, such as leaders of business and civil society. The Initiative recommends other ways of releasing funds for development, including deeper debt relief, an expansion of Africa's trade opportunities and enhanced South-South cooperation.

Can the UN deliver its part of the Initiative during its budgetary crisis?

The current financial difficulties of the UN do not justify any reduction in its activities in Africa, a continent it has identified as the world's foremost development challenge. The financial implications for the Secretariat, the most hard-pressed part of the system, are quite small. Operating agencies, including the World Bank and other multilateral and bilateral donors, are expected to meet the external financial resource requirements for the various components of the Initiative. With the UN playing a catalytic role, the commitment of the heads of all UN agencies ensures an unprecedented level of concerted action.

Will Member States support the Special Initiative?

Since 1986, Member States have directed the UN to give special attention to Africa. In various UN programmes unanimously adopted by Member States, they have jointly identified the most significant challenges facing the continent and the most appropriate ways of addressing them. The Special Initiative begins with a one-year campaign to mobilize the political and financial support required for successful implementation. Early consultations with a number of countries indicate that this Initiative is welcomed, and further intensive consultations are planned at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. The participation of the chairman of the Organization of African Unity in the launching of the Special Initiative demonstrates the offi-

cial recognition and support given to it by the leadership of Africa. A major meeting of Africa's ministers of finance and planning reviewed the Initiative in depth, and other ministerial meetings on the continent have also endorsed it.

How does this Initiative differ from past UN programmes for Africa?

The Initiative is innovative because it aims to give practical expression to the policy commitments made in the past, such as the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UNNADAF) and the UN System-wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development. Second, financial mobilization will take place with the full cooperation of the World Bank. Third, specific leadership roles are taken by agencies across the UN system for each of the 14 major components of the Initiative. Fourth, the heads of UN agencies will hold themselves mutually accountable for achieving results.

Who will be in charge of the Special Initiative and how will it be managed?

For each of the major components of the Initiative, a lead UN agency or agencies will be responsible for resource mobilization and for coordinating implementation. All 14 major components of the Initiative respond to priorities established by African leaders, and almost all the programme implementation will be based on requests from African governments. The UN Administrative Committee on Coordination, composed of the heads of all UN agencies, will monitor implementation of the Special Initiative through a Steering Committee co-chaired by the Administrator of the UN Development Programme and the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa.

What is the World Bank's role in the Special Initiative?

The Bank has agreed to lead in the resource mobilization for the two largest components of the Special Initiative: basic education and health reform. It is also expected to play an active role in all other components of the Special Initiative.

Why is so much emphasis being given to basic education?

In recent years consistent evidence has shown that basic education, particularly for girls and women, is the best possible development investment. Basic education is strongly correlated with a number

of desirable outcomes: greater participation in democracy, more productive farmers, better family planning and higher incomes. The Special Initiative intends to help Africa meet the goal of universal basic education adopted at the UN's Education for All Conference in 1990. Strengthening and expanding access to basic education may also give some impetus to expanding opportunities in higher and tertiary education.

Why is there so much emphasis on social development?

The international community has agreed, most recently at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, that improved social conditions are of critical importance for balanced development. It is also recognized that Africa's economic crisis has led to cutbacks in social spending in recent years and a reversal in some countries of the gains made in social development since political independence. The Special Initiative, therefore, addresses the backlog of unfulfilled needs through social investment programmes which will be prepared by African governments with the assistance of the international community.

How will the Initiative help Africa surmount its development crisis?

With its differentiated and flexible approach, the Initiative aims to help African countries that are affected by conflict as well as boost development efforts in the majority of African countries. The Initiative will help Africa strengthen its capacity to build peace and resolve conflicts through the Organization of African Unity and also through a stronger civil society. With its emphasis on basic education and health, the Initiative will support African efforts to accelerate the creation of the basic conditions for more rapid development. With its activities in such areas as food and water security, resource mobilization and governance, the Initiative will also help African countries improve the livelihoods of their people, increase their productivity, enhance the climate for investment and establish the necessary conditions for sustainable economic and social development.

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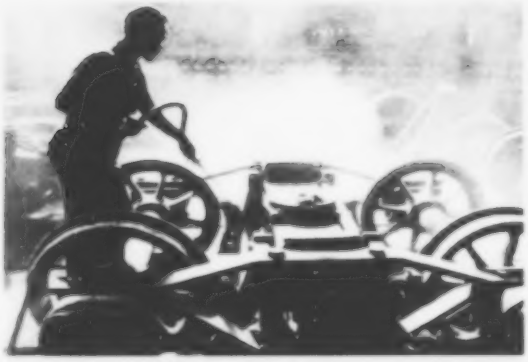
Enhancing Support for a Continent's Development

To provide renewed impetus to African development over the next decade, the United Nations is launching the System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. This multi-billion dollar programme of concrete actions will devote the bulk of its resources to expanding basic education and health care in the continent. It also aims to promote peace and better governance and, among other things, increase water and food security. Led by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Special Initiative — unique in UN history as its largest coordinated action — demonstrates the commitment of the UN system to dramatically reinforce and energize its support for Africa's development priorities and efforts.

Despite its abundant promise and potential, Africa has been beset over the past three decades by social and economic crises which have made it the world's foremost development challenge. Nevertheless, prospects for African development are now much improved, warranting a higher level of priority for Africa on the global agenda and renewed support from the international community. This timely reaffirmation of solidarity is particularly needed to consolidate the progress being made in several African countries, as well as to help find appropriate ways of assisting those countries that are riven by conflict and face added obstacles of incomparable severity on the path to social and economic advancement.

As the UN's most significant mobilization of international support for development in one world region, the Special Initiative contains practical actions, springing from priorities identified by Africa's leadership, which will make a major difference to the continent's future. The Initiative also aims to help rationalize development assistance to Africa and maximize its impact. Indeed, an effective partnership with donor countries and institutions is critical to the success of the Special Initiative. To this end, the UN system will mount a one-year campaign to secure the level of political mobilization required both within Africa and in the international community to surmount the obstacles to the continent's development.



Components of the Special Initiative

The Special Initiative comprises 14 specific components for action, based on four cross-cutting themes derived from development priorities defined by Africans themselves. These components were chosen because of their clear potential for making a rapid, significant and durable impact. Each component has its own implementation schedule and financing context, as well as a relevant lead UN agency or agencies responsible for oversight and mobilization of funding.

While implementation will be led at the country level by African governments, the heads of UN agencies will also hold themselves mutually accountable for progress towards achieving the Initiative's goals. In addition to their roles in implementing the 14 components and maintaining their current programmes in Africa, individual UN agencies may also carry out related programmes which reinforce the Initiative and which are listed in an appendix to the Initiative document.

Give Development a Chance

The first theme consists of actions which are required to create a conducive climate for development. It recognizes that in countries torn by warfare, it is meaningless to talk of economic development without first addressing conflict resolution, national reconciliation and peace-building. To support the peace process in Africa, the Special Initiative will focus on three priorities:

- *strengthening the Organization of African Unity's capacity to engage in conflict prevention, management and resolution;*

- *strengthening selected organs of civil society engaged in peace-building and the promotion of human rights and democracy; and*

- *promoting the use of the mass media, particularly radio broadcasting, to support peace-building, both through the reinforcement of a culture of tolerance and through the education and empowerment of people to enable them to express their views and participate in the political process.*

While tangible backing from the international community remains vital for Africa's development efforts, budgets for external development assistance are under growing pressure in donor countries. In recognition of this situation, the Special Initiative seeks to encourage the release of more resources for development through a combination of action and advocacy that will involve African countries, donor countries and institutions, and the UN system itself.

The Special Initiative on Africa will assist in the mobilization of the continent's internal resources by helping to improve revenue collection as well as stimulating domestic savings and investment. The financial intermediation system will also be strengthened for better resource allocation. The Initiative will help to harness information technology for development to improve internal links between African countries, its subregions and the rest of the world.

The Initiative also strives to galvanize external support for Africa's economic transition in the critical areas of debt relief, trade access and South-South cooperation. With the Secretary-General expected to utilize his moral authority to

A "Test Case" for Cooperation

The UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa arose as a follow-up to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's discussions on the continent's development challenges in late 1994 with the heads of all UN organizations gathered in the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC).

As "a test case for international cooperation and development and for the United Nations," the Secretary-General said, Africa has been singled out for special attention by the UN General Assembly and major UN conferences, most recently the July 1995 ECOSOC High-level meeting. Policy initiatives — the 1986-90 UN Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD), its successor, the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), and the System-wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development — have also been launched to provide a framework for accelerating Africa's development.

But in recognition of the need for more concrete actions to fulfill the agreements reached at these and other forums, the ACC set up a Steering Committee on the Initiative, co-chaired by Mr. James Gustave Speth, Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa. Organized in five working groups — on water, food security, governance, social and human development and resource mobilization — the Steering Committee was responsible for shaping the Initiative's components.

Its membership was drawn from across the UN system: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and the UN Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

By participating in the Special Initiative, the organizations of the UN family have collectively declared that not only is the development of the African continent their highest priority, but that Africa's prospects are positive and deserve additional support.

accelerate concrete actions in these areas of activity, the Special Initiative will:

- *encourage multilateral and bilateral creditors to reduce Africa's external debt burden and make it more sustainable; encourage African countries to manage their debt more effectively; and encourage the UN system, with the Secretary-General's leadership, to have a more integrated and active strategy on African debt;*

- *help lessen Africa's aid dependency by expanding trade access, diversifying export opportunities, boosting the inflows of foreign direct investment, and increasing the continent's capacity to compete in the international economy;*

- *enhance South-South cooperation and partnerships in trade, finance, production and services, particularly through stronger private sector linkages.*

New Hope for the Upcoming Generation

A major thrust of the Special Initiative, and its largest resource commitment, is to greatly increase the provision of basic education and health care in order to ensure that African children have vastly improved opportunities for productive and rewarding lives.

Accomplishment of these goals will also help empower women, an effort which will have a clear impact on development through more manageable population growth rates and enhanced human welfare.

The Special Initiative, therefore, will conduct a 10-year campaign to ensure basic education for all African children. There will also be a special emphasis on educating girls and women as part of the effort to make Africa's education system equitable, accessible, relevant and of high quality. The World Bank will lead the financial mobilization for this component which, at between $12.5 bn and $15.5 bn, is the Initiative's largest. But progress in this component will require a significant reallocation of resources as well as a long-term commitment by African and donor governments to the principle of education for all in a continent where up to half of all adults are illiterate and lack the basic skills needed for more rapid development.

As part of a decade-long strategy to reform the health sector, the Special Initiative will put particular emphasis on boosting the capacity of Africa's health systems to reduce, on a sustainable basis, the most common causes of morbidity

and mortality. This means increasing the coverage, quality and access to primary health care services and specially targeting the most common preventable and/or treatable diseases. These include malaria, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis and major childhood illnesses.

The Special Initiative also addresses poverty reduction by promoting employment and sustainable livelihoods. The major thrust in this area involves efforts to upgrade the informal sector, which employs about 60 per cent of Africa's labour force, the majority being women. The Initiative will support increased access to technology, skills development, entrepreneurial training and micro-credit. It will also promote a participatory approach to developing sustainable livelihoods in environmentally marginal areas, especially rural communities in arid and semi-arid agro-ecological zones, building on local knowledge and community-based action.

Strengthening the Capacity for Governance

It is widely recognized in Africa that better governance will enable Africans to fulfill their political, economic and social aspirations, and the continent's leaders are taking steps in this direction. With additional support needed to accelerate this process, the Special Initiative aims to help expand capacities for transparent, responsible and effective governance by strengthening Africa's civil service to better manage development. It will also help build independent judicial systems, support the functioning of parliaments and electoral processes, make public administration more accountable, and increase the flow of public information on development policies and programmes.

A second component is strengthening civil society. The dramatic growth of pluralistic forces in Africa has been one of the most promising developments of recent years. The Initiative will help reinforce the role of civil society and its capacity to participate in development. It will also help selected civil society organizations engage in peace-building, conflict resolution and national reconciliation, with a special focus on women's organizations. Three sub-regional centres are envisaged to promote conflict prevention and resolution, linking public and private organizations within Africa to the UN and to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) addressing issues of human rights and social justice.

Urgency on Survival Issues

The interrelated issues of food production, population growth and protection of Africa's fragile environment from further damage present a formidable challenge. Food and water security are also key elements to be tackled. Africa has been a net food importer since the early 1960s. Hunger and poor nutrition are widespread, especially among women and children, and food insecurity is most severe in the rural areas where 90 per cent of Africa's poor live. The Special Initiative will address food security and drought management by promoting:

- *control of land degradation and desertification;*
- *soil quality improvement through plant nutrition management and fertilizer use;*
- *food security, with a special emphasis on women. This will involve advocating for the reform of laws that contribute to the subordination of women, and enactment of new laws and changes in practices regarding land ownership and access to credit and extension services.*

The second component of this theme is ensuring sustainable use of and equitable access to freshwater in Africa, as well as household water security for drinking and sanitation for at least 80 per cent of the population. The Initiative will back these two efforts with freshwater assessments to provide accurate information on the quantity and quality of water as a prerequisite for its future development. Finally, improved water management practices will be fostered to assure adequate water for food production. This will include encouraging irrigation development and adoption of appropriate technologies.

Mobilizing support for the Special Initiative

The 14 components of the Special Initiative on Africa are of two types: those which require substantial resource mobilization and implementation actions, and those which call primarily for a strengthening and rationalization of existing efforts. While the cumulative financial resources required for implementation of the Special Initiative are substantial — estimated at close to $25 bn over a 10-year period — the lion's share of this amount will come from a reordering of priorities in African national budgets and reallocations of existing levels of multilateral and bilateral official development assistance (ODA).

To this end, the Special Initiative contains three innovations which will facili-

tate development cooperation, increase aid effectiveness, and provide a framework for the resource mobilization necessary to implement the Initiative. First, goal-oriented regional forums of multilateral and bilateral donors are planned to help mobilize funds for Africa's larger development priorities, such as education and health. These forums will complement individual country programmes, and could involve interested private sector and NGO representatives as well as donors.

A second innovation involves committing African governments and donors to preparation of goal-oriented investment programmes which directly address the major strategic objectives in each country. Donor support that is channelled within these confines will have a much more significant impact, and donors will be more likely to carry out joint activities. A third initiative will seek to broaden Consultative Group and Roundtable meetings to include non-traditional participants.

The Special Initiative includes innovations to facilitate development cooperation, increase aid effectiveness and mobilize resources.

Although individual UN agencies will play a major role in the financial mobilization efforts for each of the Special Initiative's components, the involvement and support of bilateral and multilateral donors is key. The mobilization exercise should contribute to the rationalization and redirection of existing UN and external resources, as well as helping to channel new resources to Africa's priority areas. The exact mix of new and existing resources will be determined on the basis of regional consultations and national programmes.

Africa at a turning point

Africa has reached a critical turning point in its history. After having suffered through a long period of economic stagnation and decline — indeed, the 1980s have been termed a "lost decade" for development — Africa's prospects are mixed. It is the only region in the world where poverty is projected to increase over the next decade, and its annual population growth rate is the world's highest. Civil conflict continues to exact a massive human toll in a number of countries.

However, there are also many positive indicators. Far-reaching economic reforms adopted across the continent have begun to yield positive results in some countries. Nearly half of all African countries have been implementing structural adjustment programmes for more than a decade, seeking to correct economic imbalances and encouraging faster growth of the private sector.

Over the past few years, growth rates in three countries have exceeded 8 per cent per annum; in eight others, they averaged between 6 and 8 per cent, and a dozen more attained levels of from 3 to 6 per cent. A climate conducive to increased domestic and foreign investment is being created. Capital markets are being formed and African entrepreneurship is expanding. There is also agreement that progress

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in human development, measurable by concrete social indicators, must be the end result of reform efforts.

Just as significant, Africa's leaders have taken action to address the devastating impact of conflict on development, working to strengthen institutional mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of some of the region's most intractable wars. The

end of long-running conflicts in Angola, Mozambique, and potentially Liberia, the demise of apartheid in South Africa, and the accession to power of democratically elected governments in many countries have provided new hope to the continent's peoples. This, and the emergence of a strengthened civil society, augur well for a stable and prosperous future.

But major challenges remain. Africa's crippling debt burden — which reached $313 bn in 1994, equivalent to 234 per cent of its export income and 83 per cent of GDP — continues to be a major impediment to growth and a disincentive to domestic and foreign investment. Africa also faces new challenges, brought about by economic globalization and the expansion in world trade, which must be addressed if the continent is not to become even further marginalized from the global economy.

A development consensus

In light of Africa's need — recognized by the international community — to take charge of its own development and set its own agenda, African leaders have affirmed, through the Organization of African Unity's 1995 Cairo Agenda for Action, that it is time to move towards the concrete implementation of those development strategies agreed upon in various international forums.

The Cairo Agenda identifies a set of issues — governance, peace and stability; food security; human resource development; resource mobilization; regional economic cooperation and integration; and structural transformation of Africa's economies — as key priorities for immediate action.

The Special Initiative has built on this consensus, identifying actions which support Africa's priorities and which will provide a real stimulus to the continent's growth.

This monumental effort to enhance Africa's development possibilities will require strong international support in order to achieve its goals. A one-year mobilization of political support for the Special Initiative will be undertaken, in which its key emphases will be publicized and the case for support to Africa will be made. The campaign will also demonstrate the UN's lead role in devising new ways to foster African development.

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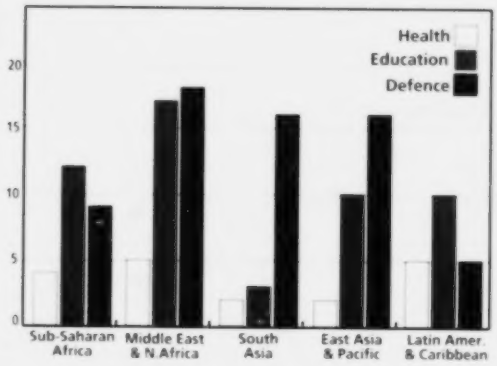
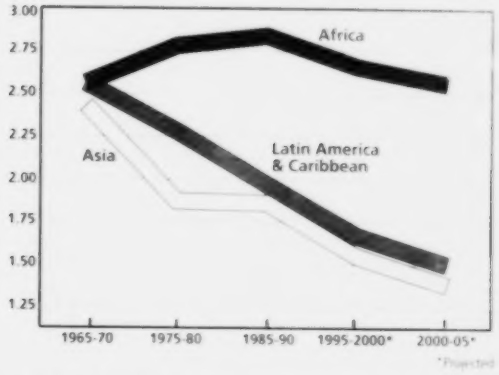
Economic and Social Indicators

Government spending (1995; %)



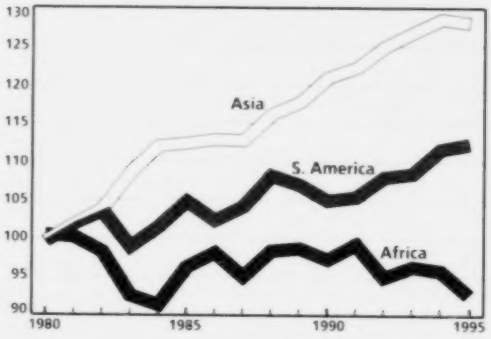
Source: UN Africa Recovery from UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1996*

Population growth rates (annual % change)



Source: UN Africa Recovery from UN, *World Population Prospects, The 1994 Revision, 1995*

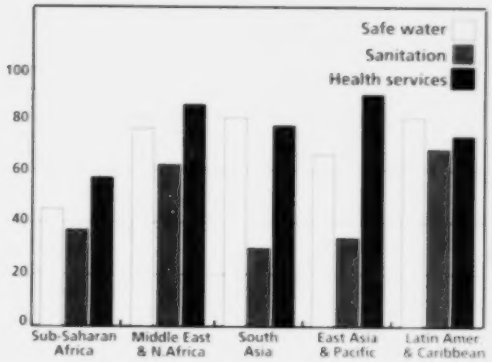
Per capita food production (1979-81=100)



1995 figure for Africa is provisional

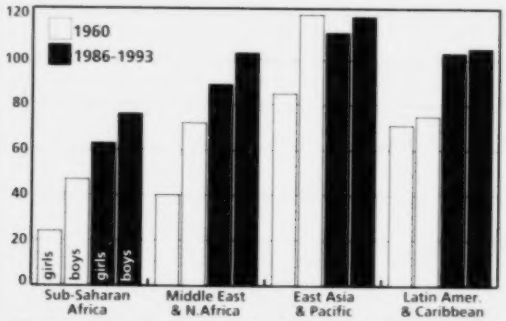
Source: UN Africa Recovery from FAO, *Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Vol.8,#1/2, 1995*

Access to basic services (1995; % of total population)



Source: UN Africa Recovery from UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1996*

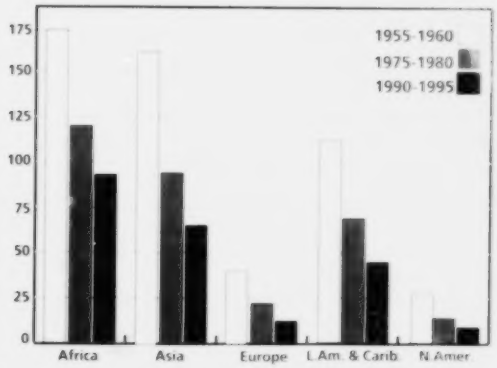
Primary education enrolment (gross; %)*



*The gross enrolment ratio is the total number of children enrolled in a schooling level – whether or not they belong in that level's age group – as a percentage of all children in that age group.

Source: UN Africa Recovery from UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1996*

Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)



Source: UN Africa Recovery from UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1996*

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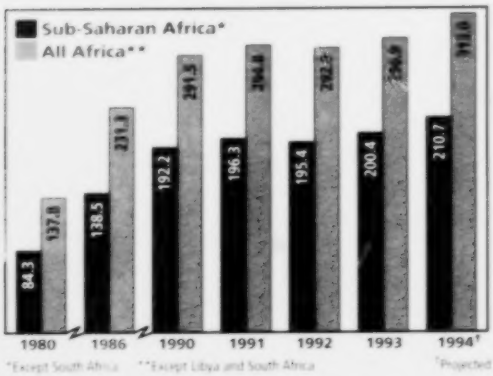
Economic and Social Indicators

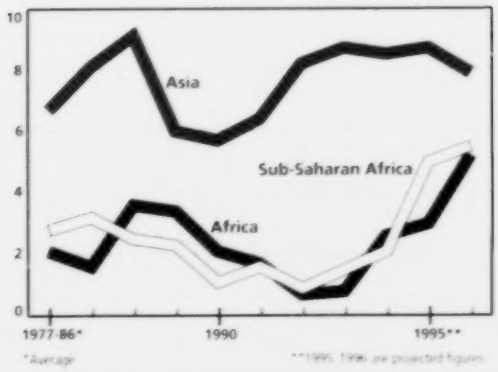
External debt
($ bn)



*Except South Africa **Except Libya and South Africa †Projected

Source: UN Africa Recovery from World Bank, *World Debt Tables, 1993-94* and *1994-95*

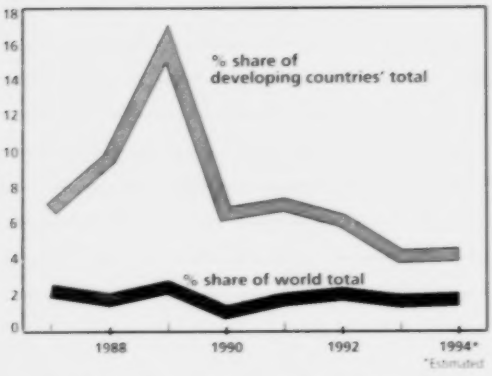
Real GDP growth
(annual % change; constant prices)



*Average **1995, 1996 are projected figures

Source: UN Africa Recovery from IMF, *World Economic Outlook, 1995*

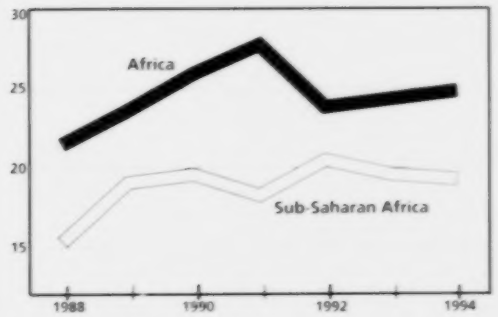
Foreign direct investment flows to Africa



*Estimated

Source: UN Africa Recovery from UNCTAD, *Foreign Direct Investment in Africa, 1995*

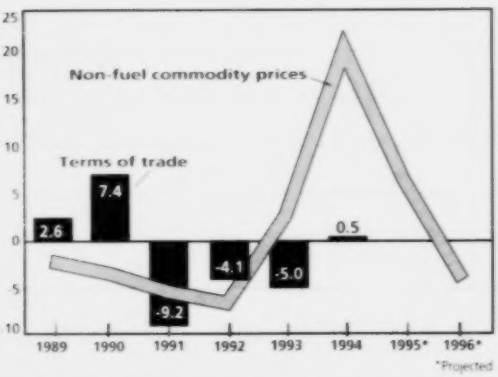
Net resource flows*
($ bn)



* = total net disbursements from all sources, including official development assistance, export credits, private direct and portfolio investment.

Source: UN Africa Recovery from OECD, *Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows, 1996*

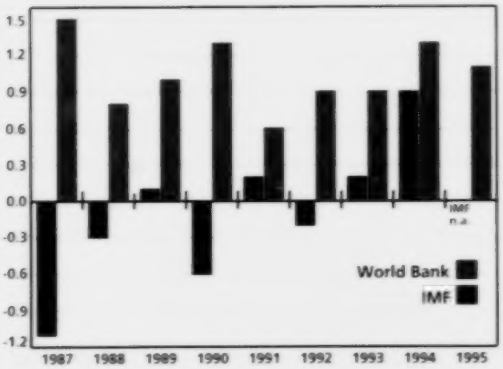
Africa's trade picture
(annual % change)



*Projected

Sources: UN Africa Recovery from Economic Commission for Africa, and IMF, *International Financial Statistics Yearbook, 1995*

Net transfers to sub-Saharan Africa
($ bn)



Sources: UN Africa Recovery from IMF, *International Financial Statistics Yearbook, 1995* and World Bank, *World Debt Tables, 1993-94, 1994-95*

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Special Initiative
on AFRICA

Secretary-General launches new programme to boost African development

New York, 15 March 1996 — Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, along with Mr. James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, and heads of UN agencies in Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Paris and Rome, today launched the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, a multi-billion dollar programme of concrete actions to accelerate African development. The unprecedented Special Initiative aims over a 10-year period to greatly expand basic education and health care, promote peace and better governance, and improve water and food security. It also involves a year-long mobilization of political commitment and support for Africa.

Participating in the launching ceremony for the Special Initiative at UN headquarters were Mr. James Gustave Speth, UN Development Programme Administrator and co-chair of the Initiative's Steering Committee, along with the heads of all New York-based UN agencies, in the presence of the UN ambassadorial corps. A live satellite link-up to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, seat of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), enabled Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, current chairman of the OAU, and Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, OAU Secretary-General, to provide an official response on behalf of Africa. Participation in Addis Ababa also included Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, who co-chairs the Special Initiative Steering Committee.

The Special Initiative is the UN system's most significant mobilization of support for the development of a continent's people and its largest coordinated action. Implementation of the Initiative's 14 components will cost up to $25 billion. The World Bank has agreed to lead in the mobilization of over 85 per cent of this amount, the bulk of which will go toward improving basic education and health. Reallocations of existing resources will be required, as will better ways of managing aid. To this end, the Initiative contains new measures to improve donor coordination and increase aid effectiveness.

The Special Initiative's 14 components are grouped in four themes (see below) which reflect Africa's agreed development priorities and were presented at a major meeting of African ministers of finance and planning held recently in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Each component has its own framework for implementation and a relevant lead UN agency or agencies which will be held accountable for progress in achieving the Initiative's goals. National governments will have responsibility for implementation on the ground.

• Give Development a Chance

This theme consists of actions which are required to create a conducive climate for development. The Initiative will help strengthen Africa's capacity, through the Organization of African Unity, to engage in conflict prevention, management and

resolution, and help civil society organs and the mass media to support peace-building. The Initiative will also assist in releasing more funds for development, by improving mobilization of Africa's internal resources and by promoting action on deeper debt relief, greater trade access and improved South-South cooperation. Third, the use of information technology for development will be expanded.

• New Hope for the Upcoming Generation

The Initiative's major thrust, with the largest commitment of resources, is on assuring Africa's children vastly improved opportunities for productive and rewarding lives. This goal will be achieved through a 10-year campaign to provide basic education for all and expanded health care at the community level. Under this theme, poverty reduction will also be addressed by the promotion of employment and sustainable livelihoods, particularly in environmentally marginal areas.

• Strengthening the Capacity for Governance

The Special Initiative will support African countries' efforts to expand their capacities for transparent, responsible and effective governance, by strengthening the civil service and civil society organizations. It will also help build independent judicial systems and support the functioning of parliaments and electoral processes.

• Urgency on Survival Issues

Africa's future hinges on the successful management of the interrelated issues of food production, population growth and protection of its fragile environment. The Special Initiative will address issues of food security and drought management by promoting control of land degradation and desertification, improvements in soil quality and strengthening women's access to credit, extension and land ownership. It will also ensure the sustainable use of and equitable access to freshwater.

In addition to these concrete commitments, the Secretary-General and the heads of UN agencies will participate actively in a year-long effort to mobilize international political commitment and support for African development. Collaboration with the donor community is key to the Initiative's success and to raising Africa's priority status on the global agenda.

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES, please contact the UNDP Division of Public Affairs, Tel: (212) 906 6709/5315; Fax: (212) 906 5364; or Africa Recovery, UN Department of Public Information, Tel: (212) 963 6857; Fax: (212) 963 4556.

FOR OTHER INQUIRIES, please contact the Initiative Secretariat, Tel: (212) 906 5926/5965; Fax: (212) 906 5423; Directors of Public Information of participating UN agencies; or, in Africa, UN Resident Coordinators.

UN System-wide
Special Initiative
on AFRICA

ACC Declaration on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

15 March 1996

The Special Initiative on Africa being launched today by the Secretary-General, with the executive heads of all the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system represented in the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), reflects the priority accorded to Africa's development by the international community, the mandates emanating from the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and major United Nations conferences, and the undertakings made individually and collectively by African governments to accelerate the development of their countries. It is a concrete expression of the commitment of all organizations of the system to enhance substantially their support for the development efforts of African countries.

The Initiative consists of a set of major programmes which address established priorities for development. It will be backed by a year-long effort, to be undertaken by all organizations of the United Nations system, to mobilize world-wide political commitment and support for Africa's development. The aim is to develop practical actions which can serve to maximize the support provided by the United Nations system to African development, and help ensure that Africa is given the attention and place it deserves on the international agenda.

The economic, human development and environmental challenges facing Africa continue to be of unparalleled severity, in spite of the sustained efforts of African governments and civil society, and the assistance of the international donor community. At the same time, prospects for Africa's development are, in many ways, better now than they have been for many years. To realize these prospects will require renewed determination, within Africa as well as by the international community, to meet priority development needs. It will require innovation, renewed dedication, strong solidarity, and urgent and concerted action.

This Special Initiative aims to contribute to this effort through a number of concrete actions in four thematic areas of fundamental importance to Africa's future. It is an expression of renewed strong commitment by the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to Africa's development. The actions and themes it embodies all respond to specific priorities identified by African governments and the international community.

Give Development a Chance

This theme focuses on enhancing support for promoting some of the basic conditions for civil tranquillity and economic development.

- ***Peace-building, Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation.*** *This effort will include support for strengthening the capacity of the Organization of African Unity to engage effectively in peace-building throughout Africa. It will be accompanied by initiatives aimed at strengthening critically important civil society groupings which work on peace-building, and fostering communications for peace in Africa;*
- ***External Support for Africa's Economic Transition*** *will be enhanced through actions aimed at: promoting more favourable resolutions of Africa's debt situation; widening trade access and export opportunities, including diversification; fostering foreign direct investment; and enhancing South-South partnerships;*
- ***Domestic Savings and Investment*** *will be bolstered through technical support; and*
- ***Information Technology*** *and systems will be fostered to improve links within Africa and with the rest of the world.*

New Hope for the Upcoming Generation

No actions are more important than those which assure parents that their children will have better opportunities and a better future. The largest commitment of the resources to be mobilized through the Special Initiative will build upon ongoing actions in African countries designed to better peoples' conditions through expanded access to education and health, particularly for girls and women. This effort will be accompanied by parallel actions concerned with employment and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods.

- ***Basic Education for All African Children*** *will be the goal of a major 10-year effort of critical importance for the upcoming generation;*
- ***Health Sector Reform*** *will also involve a decade-long effort to strengthen, revitalize and expand Africa's primary health facilities, in order to provide essential basic care and outreach services to the majority of the population; and*
- ***Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods*** *will be furthered by promoting employment-generating opportunities particularly in the informal sector, and fostering sustainable livelihoods, particularly in environmentally marginal areas.*

Strengthening the Capacity for Governance

Supporting actions by the United Nations system to bolster significant efforts under way in Africa to improve governance will focus on:

- ***Building capacities for good and accountable governance*** *through effective civil services, and the strengthening of independent judicial systems, parliamentary functions and electoral processes; and*
- ***Strengthening the capacities of civil society*** *to be a more active partner in development, and enhancing its contribution to and participation in policy-making.*

Urgency on Survival Issues

The Initiative place special emphasis on the need to enhance sustainable food and water security in Africa. A number of focused programmes will be undertaken.

- ***Food Security and Drought Management*** *actions will emphasize: reducing land degradation and increasing desertification control, improving soil quality, and enhancing food security with special emphasis on the situation of women.*
- ***Water Security*** *will focus on: household water and sanitation needs; assuring sustainable use of and equitable access to freshwater; improved freshwater assessments; and better management of water for food production.*

The total financing required for these actions is estimated at up to $25 billion over a 10-year period. Financing will come mainly from a redirection of existing resources at national and international levels, as well as from new resources. The World Bank has agreed to take the lead in mobilizing the bulk of the required resources. In addition, other UN agencies will contribute financial resources and will participate in resource mobilization initiatives.

The Special Initiative also includes three innovations intended, on the one hand, to make development partnerships more effective, efficient, and participatory, particularly as regards Africa's civil society, and, on the other, to enhance the prospects for resource mobilization: the creation of goal-oriented regional forums; the preparation of goal-oriented country programmes by sectors; and a broadening of participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtable meetings to include leaders of business and civil society.

In addition to the actions embodied in the Special Initiative, United Nations agencies and organizations have agreed to maintain and enhance parallel efforts which will reinforce the aims of the Special Initiative. Such actions include support for the effective macroeconomic management of African economies; infrastructural development including ground and air transportation and telecommunications; civil soci-

ety empowerment for poverty reduction; drought preparedness and mitigation; special programmes in solar energy; and improved postal administration.

Agencies and organizations of the United Nations system will pursue each of these undertakings with determination and full commitment to their effective implementation and positive development impact.

As part of this commitment, all heads of United Nations agencies and organizations are pledged to participate in a year-long effort at mobilizing political support for Africa's development.

In so doing, the United Nations system will work closely with African leaders and peoples, as they pursue their priorities aimed at assuring a better future for the women, men and children of the continent.

This commitment comes at a time of severe financial crisis for the United Nations, and at a difficult time for development assistance. Africa's development needs cannot, however, wait for better times. Indeed the vigour of the commitments and partnerships involved in the Special Initiative on Africa should serve to promote renewed determination and far-sightedness on the part of the United Nations, Africa and the whole international community, in facing humanity's future.

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The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on AFRICA

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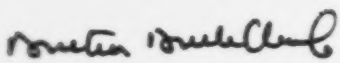
PREFACE

At a time when conditions are steadily improving for many peoples around the world, the socio-economic plight of Africa remains a matter of great concern. The situation has reached a critical stage. Of the 47 least developed countries in the world, 32 are in Africa. Today, over 220 million Africans live in conditions of absolute poverty, and Africa is the only region in the world where poverty is expected to increase during this decade.

The United Nations has today emerged as a focal point for international efforts to promote peace-building, peace-keeping, and national reconciliation throughout Africa. The Organization has helped Africa work to expand its economic opportunities, and narrow the growing gap between Africa and other parts of the world. Over many years and in many different ways, United Nations development efforts have helped to save lives, and to improve the quality of life for millions of Africans.

These efforts continue to be vital, they must be expanded and intensified. Even in the midst of its worst-ever financial crisis, the United Nations must help seek new ways to gain wider support for Africa's development needs. It must find new means of overcoming donor fatigue, and new ways to rekindle support for development efforts.

The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa reflects my personal determination, and that of the Heads of all United Nations agencies, to work collectively for the enhancement of African development. This Initiative is substantive and action-oriented, and it can make a difference. I urge the international community to take up this challenge, and to give this Special Initiative on Africa the strong support it deserves.



Boutros Boutros-Ghali
Secretary-General
United Nations

FOREWORD

The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Heads of UN agencies have made this Special Initiative possible through their leadership and collective and individual commitment to the cause of Africa's development. It has been our pleasure to co-chair an ACC Steering Committee of extraordinarily dedicated senior officials in the UN system who have been instrumental in putting together the technical aspects of this Initiative. As we have worked, we have all been aware that the breadth and depth of this Special Initiative constitute an unusually innovative and significant cooperative effort, perhaps of an historic importance.

We are pleased to thank the members of the Special Initiative's Steering Committee:

Mary Chinery-Hesse, Deputy Director-General, International Labour Organization;

Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General, Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development;

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme, and Chairperson, Working Group on Water;

Edward V.K. Jaycox, Vice President for Africa, The World Bank, and Chairman, Working Group on Resource Mobilization;

Richard Jolly, former Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund;

Henri Lopes, Assistant Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and Chairman, Working Group on Social and Human Development;

Nafis Sadik, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund;

Ebrahim M. Samba, Director, Regional Office for Africa, World Health Organization;

Abdoulaye Sawadogo, Assistant Director-General for Agriculture, Food and Agriculture Organization; and

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Assistant Administrator, UNDP, Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, and Chairperson, Working Group on Governance.

Thanks are also due to Mr. Samir Sanbar, Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Public Information for his valuable work on the launching preparations of the Initiative; to Dr. Hartwig de Haen, Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Policy Department, Food and Agriculture Organization, and Chairman, Working Group on Food Security; and to Messrs. Stephen Lewis, Deputy Executive Director for External Relations of UNICEF, and Djibril Diallo, Director, UNDP's Division of Public Affairs, for having kindly agreed to co-chair an informal Working Group on Political Mobilization for the Initiative.

In addition we wish to express appreciation to the small, but highly effective Secretariat of the Special Initiative which laboured with consistent dedication to backstop the entire effort. Dr. Sadig Rasheed, Director, Public Administration, Human Resources and Social Development of the UN Economic Commission of Africa, coordinated the Secretariat. Mr. Robert J. Berg, President of the International Development Conference, was Senior Advisor to the Secretariat. As the implementation of the Special Initiative begins, we look forward to expanding this collaboration within the UN system; with African governments, regional institutions, civil society and the private sector; as well as with Africa's bilateral and multilateral partners. The resultant actions should bring Africa closer to the ultimate goal of sustainable human development.

James Gustave Speth
Administrator
United Nations Development Programme
New York

K.Y. Amoako
Executive Secretary
Economic Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa

The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on AFRICA

Part I

THE SETTING

1. Africa is a continent at a critical turning point in its history. It is a continent beset by economic and social crises, yet it is also a continent on the march, full of promise.

2. The former aspect has been the common perception about the continent. Economic decline, falling per capita incomes and worsening social conditions have led many to characterize the 1980s as a "lost decade" for Africa. Fifty-four per cent of the population is estimated to live in absolute poverty, and Africa is the only region in the world in which poverty is projected to increase over the next decade. The annual rate of growth of population of the African continent is the highest in the world, with serious negative implications for sustained economic growth and sustainable development of the region.

3. Twenty-two out of the 25 countries appearing in the UNDP's category of "low human development" countries are in Africa, and 33 out of the 47 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are also in Africa. The proliferation of armed conflicts and their staggering human toll — in terms of massive loss of human lives, refugees and internally displaced persons — have also strengthened the perception of Africa as a continent in turmoil and lacking in political stability.

4. However, this is only part of the African reality, and it is neither fair nor objective to label developments in the continent solely on the basis of these generalizations. Significant divergences in economic performance among countries and across sub-regions are evident throughout the continent. In the past few years, growth rates in three countries have exceeded 8 per cent per annum, eight countries have reached between 6 and 8 per cent, and a dozen countries have averaged between 3 and 6 per cent. Thirty-five African countries have been implementing structural adjustment programmes for more than a decade, and have succeeded in putting in place economic reform measures to correct fundamental economic imbalances and support private sector development.

5. The end of the civil wars and the subsequent accession of elected governments to power in Angola and Mozambique, as well as the dramatic demise of apartheid rule and the establishment of democratic government in South Africa are developments of tremendous significance. They offer concrete examples of peaceful social and political transitions and economic progress in those countries. They provide a unique opportunity for the emergence of a powerful growth pole in southern Africa, and dynamic interlinkages between the economies of the sub-region and the rest of the continent.

6. The surge towards political liberalization which is spreading across the continent and the emergence of an increasingly strengthened civil society are enhancing the chances for further entrenchment of democratization, pluralism and more accountable and transparent political systems. There is also movement to incorporate women more fully in positions of economic and political prominence. Advancement of women and achievement of equality are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice. The recently held Fourth World Conference on Women agreed to concrete actions to promote greater equality for women and to ensure full choice and opportunities in the development of their societies. The Special Initiative is an opportunity to further the implementation of these agreements.

7. African governments have also taken a number of measures to respond to the challenges and obstacles to development. These include establishing mechanisms for conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts; the effective development and utilization of human resources; harnessing the continent's vast natural resources; mobilizing human and financial resources for development; strengthening regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration; and taking advantage of the trend towards economic globalization through appropriate policies and modernization of agriculture and industry.

8. The challenge of economic globalization is particularly formidable. So far, Africa has failed to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by growth in international trade, interdependent enterprise, information technology, and investment and financial flows to developing countries. This state of marginalization, which is complicated by the inadequate resolution of a crippling debt problem, needs to be countered through resolute action. But the basic way out of marginalization remains to invigorate economic performance, uppermost through industrial and agricultural development, and investments in human skills and capacities.

9. Reflecting on the overall situation of progress yet severe challenges, Africa's political leadership has increasingly focused primarily on national and regional responsibilities and how the international community can best support development as defined by Africa. The most recent and perhaps the most significant of these initiatives was the adoption on 28 March 1995, during an extraordinary session of the OAU Council of Ministers in Cairo, of *Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Agenda for Action*, which was subsequently endorsed by the June 1995 Summit of the African Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa. The Cairo Agenda reaffirmed that Africa's development is first and foremost the responsibility of the governments and people of Africa themselves. It also affirmed that priority must now be given to the implementation of the strategies and programmes for the development of African countries which have been adopted at the national, regional and continental levels.

10. The Cairo Agenda identified a set of priority issues which governments were committed to address and for which international support was requested in order to promote growth and economic recovery. These issues were:

(i) *Governance, Peace, Stability and Development;*
(ii) *Food Security;*
(iii) *Human Resource Development and Capacity Building;*
(iv) *Resource mobilization;*
(v) *Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration;*
(vi) *Structural Transformation of African Economies.*

11. In implementing these priorities, African Heads of State and Government called upon their international partners to enhance the development prospects of the continent through (i) understanding and appreciating Africa's development efforts; (ii) mitigating the adverse consequences of the Uruguay Round; and (iii) taking measures to reduce the continent's debt burden. These themes also were echoed at the July 1995 meeting of the ECOSOC High-Level Segment on Africa. This agenda must inform any credible action to be undertaken by African countries and their supporters to stimulate economic and social development in Africa.

12. There is an emerging consensus that while Africa needs external support, it is the Africans themselves, men and women, who must take charge of their destiny and who should have the fundamental responsibility for bringing about development on their continent. In seeking additional cooperation from external partners, African states and many observers note the need to change patterns of donor-recipient relations in Africa. African development has had very heavy involvement by donors who, in some cases, have virtually furnished the totality of long-term development investment funding. Technical assistance relationships have been intensive, which was justified in the past by the restricted opportunities for training afforded by colonial governments. Donor-led development is not a credible option.

A. The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

13. Despite the widespread concern expressed by the international community about the deteriorating economic and social conditions in Africa and the commitment of African governments to removing the obstacles to growth, current projections indicate that the prospects for socio-economic recovery are still not in sight for the majority of countries, particularly those afflicted by armed conflict, and that unless urgent actions are taken, living standards could continue to fall in the region.

14. The agreements reached at numerous international gatherings, such as the World Conference on Education for All, the Children's Summit, the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the UN Conference on Population and Development, the Social Summit in Copenhagen and the

women's conference in Beijing, routinely single out the problems of Africa for special attention. The July 1995 discussion on Africa at the High-Level Segment meeting of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is a powerful reminder of the depth of concern over and commitment to Africa. This solidarity with Africa is a continuing source of strength which needs to be channeled into further positive action.

15. It is against this background and recognizing that Africa represents the foremost challenge of global development, and "is a test case for international cooperation for development and for the United Nations" that the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, decided to launch this Special Initiative as a follow-up to the Fall 1994 UN Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) discussions on Africa.

16. Over the years, the UN has launched various initiatives in favour of Africa. The United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD) and its successor, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), are but the two most recent. Efforts have also been made over the years to coordinate activities of the UN system in Africa through the System-wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development.

17. This Special Initiative must be seen as reinforcing and not duplicative of either the UN-NADAF or the System-Wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development. Its aim is to identify and develop practical proposals to maximize the support provided by the UN system to African development, and to raise the priority given to Africa in the international agenda. Most of the resources in the Special Initiative will be firmly rooted in national programmes of action locally defined and managed; indeed, these initiatives only make sense in national plans and actions.

18. In establishing the scope of this Initiative, the decision was made to focus on a few issues of the highest priority and to make every effort to mobilize and coordinate the efforts of African governments and Africa's development partners to achieving their stated goals. In his 9 February 1995 letter to heads of agencies and organizations of the UN system, the Secretary-General recalled the Fall 1994 ACC meeting regarding the need "(1) to develop further practical initiatives to maximize the support provided by the UN system to African development; and (2) to raise the priority given to Africa in the international agenda." Also on that date he established a Steering Committee co-chaired by the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa with membership from FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, ILO, WHO, and the United Nations (DPCSD), to which UNEP and UNFPA were added.

19. Each of the actions in this paper reflect the priorities enunciated by Africa's leaders and reinforced through the recent ECOSOC discussions on implementing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). In fact, there is almost complete congruence between the priorities of African Heads of State and those identified in the Special Initiative. Consultations have taken place with African leaders during the formulation of this Special Initiative. These have proceeded more intensively after the October 1995 meeting of the ACC at which the Special Initiative was approved in principle. These consultations will continue both at the regional and national levels as the Special Initiative moves to the stage of implementation to ensure that ownership of the Special Initiative is firmly with African countries in partnership with the international community.

20. The Special Initiative has a twofold challenge: one, to carry out the best supportive actions congruent with Africa's priorities, which can be taken to help stimulate an added push for development in Africa, and two, to mobilize the political support needed to ensure that timely action is taken to remove some of the obstacles to Africa's development. This is also an opportunity to clearly establish the supportive role of donors in Africa by reinforcing that Africans, women and men, must be at the centre of their own development. The Initiative includes a number of innovations for improved modalities of implementation focused on an African-centred development process.

B. Key Themes of the Special Initiative

21. The Special Initiative's Steering Committee approached the complete membership of the ACC at the commencement of the exercise to gather ideas for the work of the Special Initiative. Similarly, after the 12-13 October 1995 meeting of the ACC, each member of the ACC was asked for final comments leading to this document.

22. The bulk of the work in putting together the Special Initiative was undertaken by five Working Groups which were established under the guidance of the Co-Chairmen and the Steering Committee. In establishing the Working Groups, the special emphases of the exercise were clearly demarcated. The membership of each working group included several agencies. The five working groups were:

- *Water (under the chairmanship of UNEP);*
- *Food Security (under the chairmanship of FAO);*
- *Governance (under the chairmanship of UNDP);*
- *Social and Human Development (under the chairmanship of UNESCO);*
- *Resource Mobilization (under the chairmanship of the World Bank).*

23. Priorities for the Special Initiative have been determined on the basis of the following criteria: congruence with priorities identified by Africa's leaders; strengthening the capacity of African men and women to take charge of their own development; economic and social importance in relation to people-centred sustainable development; political appeal and dramatization potential; feasibility and affordability, with emphasis on maximum possible payoff; UN comparative advantage and experience; and early visible impact. Comparative advantage was gauged by agency experience (substance and outreach in Africa) in given subject areas.

24. The priorities for this Initiative are presented under four major cross-cutting themes chosen to emphasize key issues which are essential for accelerating African development and which are easily understood by the wider audiences necessary for effective political mobilization. These four cross-cutting themes are intended to capture the idea of a momentum to give the Special Initiative its distinctive thrust. Progress in these priority areas should be sufficiently important to enhance the prospects for many other development interests shared by Africa and its external partners, and consequently, add impetus to African development.

25. The cross-cutting themes are:

26. • ***Give Development a Chance***
These are issues to ensure that there are minimum conditions for civil tranquillity and economic development. The two most critical of these factors are peace and improved external economic conditions (debt and trade prospects).

27. • ***New Hope for the Upcoming Generation***
These fundamental human development issues assure that people have a fair chance in life: education, health and sustainable employment. Each is important in and of itself, yet each reinforces the prospects for the other.

28. • ***Strengthening the Capacity for Governance***
Governance issues (particularly, transparency, accountability and responsibility, partnerships across societies and total effectiveness) have increasingly been identified as fundamental to much of development progress. This Initiative includes strengthening both the public sector and civil society. Furthermore, while in this presentation peace-building has been placed under the theme "Give Development a Chance," it is also an essential part of strengthening the capacity for governance. Again, handled well, each of these factors reinforces the other.

29. • ***Urgency on Survival Issues***
Africa virtually lives today on the edge of survival and its prospects are frightening, if current trends continue. Sustainable food and water security are the two fundamental survival issues confronting Africa. The question for each is not so much technical approaches as it is adding political and societal urgency to addressing the issues if the current poor prospects in food and water security are to be reversed.

30. These four cross-cutting themes combine to create a synergy — even among this limited number of priorities — so as to give the Initiative a distinctive thrust. Altogether, if the Initiative is successful it should be sufficiently important to enhance the prospects for many other development interests shared by Africa and its external partners and consequently, add impetus to African development. It is re-emphasized that the Initiative is not a call for action by UN agencies; rather, it is a call to support Africa-determined priorities and efforts, and to galvanize international support for their successful implementation.

31. The substantive content of the Initiative is presented in the following section.

Part II

CONTENT OF THE INITIATIVE

32. The priorities for the Initiative are of two types: those which require substantial resource mobilization and implementation actions, and those which call largely for the strengthening of synergy, coordination and rationalization of efforts. In the latter category are efforts concerned with Africa's external sector, policies concerned with domestic savings and investment, and three innovations concerned with improving aid effectiveness.

33. All of the priorities listed below form integral parts of the Special Initiative, although some, so noted, require budget and implementation arrangements to be worked out. These priorities are listed below under the subject headings of the five working groups involved in the Special Initiative.

I. Water:
- *Assuring Sustainable and Equitable Freshwater;*
- *Household Water Security; **
- *Freshwater Assessment; * and*
- *Water for Food Security. **

II. Food Security:
- *Land Degradation and Desertification Control; **
- *Soil Quality Improvement; * and*
- *Food Security with special emphasis on the role of Women.**

III. Governance:
- *Peace-building, Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation through:*
  - *– Strengthening OAU's Capacity for Peace-building,*
  - *– Strengthening Civil Society for Peace-building, and*
  - *– Communications for Peace-building;*
- *Capacity Building for Governance;*
- *Strengthening Civil Society for Development;*
- *Harnessing Information Technology for Development; and*
- *Partnership with Africa through South-South Cooperation. **

IV. Social and Human Condition:
- *Basic Education for All African Children;*
- *Health Sector Reform;*
- *Poverty Reduction through the Promotion of the Informal Sector and Employment Generating Opportunities; * and*
- *Sustainable Livelihoods in Environmentally Marginal Areas.*

V. Resource Mobilization:
- *Substantial Debt Relief;*
- *Partnership Innovations for Effective Development Cooperation through:*
  - *– Goal-Oriented Regional Forums,*
  - *– Use of Goal-Oriented Country Programmes, and*
  - *– Broadening participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtables.*
- *Trade Access and Opportunities; * and*
- *Internal Resource Mobilization. **

(= Integral parts of the Special Initiative for which budget and implementation information will be presented to the Steering Committee prior to the commencement of implementation to review, e.g., arrangements for full UN system partnerships.)*

34. Finally, it is important that this Initiative should link up in imaginative ways with other important aspects of Africa's development. Agencies, both before and after the 12-13 October 1995 ACC meeting, submitted a number of such ideas which, while not fitting into the five topic areas established for the Special Initiative are all worthy of implementation by them in as close a coordination as is possible with the Special Initiative. These activities are summarized in an appendix to this report. Individual agencies and organizations are encouraged to pursue implementation of such activities in the normal course of their work and to work closely with the Steering Committee towards achieving additional synergy with the Special Initiative.

35. Additional activities of this nature should be developed on a continuous basis. Presently they include:

- *Solar energy;*
- *Infrastructural development;*
- *Small- and medium-scale enterprise development;*
- *Civil society empowerment for poverty reduction;*
- *Enhancing postal administration in the least developed African countries; and*
- *Drought preparedness and mitigation.*

36. Each of the priorities of the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa will be presented in summary form under the themes for framing the political mobilization of the Initiative.

A. Give Development a Chance

37. In this section are a number of priorities which are instrumental for accelerating development. These include peace-building, debt relief, trade access, domestic savings and investment, and promotion of information networking.

1. Peace-building, Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation

38. There is general agreement that the failure to maintain or urgently re-establish peace has set back development in large parts of Africa. The United Nations has a comparative advantage in being able to link peace, humanitarian interventions and development. This advantage should be demonstrated in this Initiative by strengthening both peace and development efforts. The Initiative contains three actions to strengthen peace-making and peace-building in Africa as discussed below: (1) strengthening the OAU's capacity for peace-building; (2) strengthening selected civil society organizations engaged in peace-building, presented herein as part of a more embracing endeavour to strengthen civil society in Africa (see Section C 9, below); and (3) utilizing mass media to enhance communications for peace-building. These three actions are seen as mutually reinforcing with other necessary measures, and should strengthen the capacity for governance in Africa. In each of these, special provisions should be made to enhance the role of women and women's organizations in peace-building. It is noted that some of the most successful recent efforts in peace-building in certain countries have come from women's organizations. An additional priority is included on Assuring Sustainable and Equitable Freshwater (Section D. 11, below), which addresses, in part, the question of insecurities over shared water supplies, which, if not properly resolved, could lead to inter- and intra-state conflict.

a. Strengthening the OAU's Capacity for Peace-building

39. This priority will strengthen the OAU's capacity for conflict prevention, management and resolution. Increasingly the OAU and the UN are complementary partners in the key peace-building efforts in Africa. The OAU has a mandate from its members to work on conflict prevention, early warning, mediation, and low-cost observing and monitoring of conflict and cease-fire situations. It recognizes that larger problems involving peace enforcement or large scale military deployment of peacekeepers would continue to be authorized and implemented by the United Nations Security Council.

40. Over the years, the OAU has increased the breadth and frequency of its activities in conflict resolution and management. To build upon this work and create sustainable capacities, the OAU has a number of tasks before it. These include:

- *To develop a database and analytical capability to track precursors to violent outcomes of blocked political processes in the member countries;*
- *To develop a communications capability to keep up with events throughout Africa and to communicate with OAU teams that are assigned to work on specific conflict situations;*
- *To set up a 24-hour watch centre with trained military officers who will keep it operational;*
- *To develop a capacity to plan and coordinate peace operations anywhere in Africa on a scale limited to OAU capacities and resource availabilities; and*
- *To develop a network of national mediators and other conflict managers at the country level who can respond quickly when normal political conflict threatens to turn violent.*

41. This priority is germane to addressing a core mandate of the United Nations, namely that of peace-building. There is increased acceptance that peace commences with respect for the rights of the individual and of groups within pluralistic societies. Thus concern with human rights, including the right to international protection of refugees, as evidenced by the work of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights/UN Centre for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and the work of UNHCR, is basic to creating a climate of peace.

42. The OAU has established a Peace Fund to finance these improvements. This question was addressed by the report of the Secretary-General to the High-Level Segment of ECOSOC in July 1995 when the Secretary-General recommended that the donor community support the OAU Peace Fund. A trust fund, to be managed by UNDP, will be established to collect resources to support the OAU's peace-building efforts. This fund will be established on an endowment basis to give absolute assurance of the continuity of trust fund contributions to the OAU. A meaningful endowment would be $100 million to be contributed over a five-year period.

b. Strengthening Civil Society for Peace-building

43. This activity is an integral part of the goal to strengthen civil society in Africa described in Section C - 9 below.

c. Communications for Peace-building

44. It is well recognized that most of the difficulties encoun-

tered by African countries undergoing democratic transition or facing internal conflicts are due to the fact that the mass of the people have limited access to basic information which would empower them to express their views and opinions about significant development problems and to participate in the process of democratic transition and conflict resolution. In addition, some cases have been recently noted whereby the mass media has been instrumental in inciting hate and contributing to the disintegration of a country.

45. The programming, as proposed by UNESCO and as intended to be carried out under its direction, plans to use communications, particularly radio broadcasting which is the most widespread modern medium of communication in Africa, especially in rural areas, to convey messages long endorsed by practically every grouping of the United Nations and certainly those enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to promote tolerance, democracy, respect for human rights, cultural pluralism and peace-building. The major features of the mass communication environment in Africa, which will form the basis of the programme, are:

- *availability of public or state-owned radio broadcasting stations which reach, in many instances, the entire geographical territory of the country;*
- *a growing number of independent radio stations in many African countries as a result of the "liberalization" of the air-waves;*
- *gradual increase of community radio stations and newspapers;*
- *the long oral traditions of African societies which smoothly adapt to various broadcasting formats;*
- *gradual growth of human resources utilizing communications programmes in educational institutions all over the continent; and*
- *availability of programmes broadcast by such international radio organizations as the BBC, the Voice of America, Deutsche Welle, Radio France Internationale, Radio Canada International, Radio Netherlands International, Voice of Russia World Service, Radio Sweden, Radio Japan, Africa No. 1.*

46. As is now being increasingly acted upon by those promoting peace-building in Africa, particularly in the OAU and the United Nations, the primary goal of building a sustainable peaceful environment in Africa requires continuous efforts to reduce and eliminate the major sources of conflict and instability within countries. UNESCO intends to do this by reinforcing a culture of learning, tolerance and acceptance of all peoples and groups to help build confidence among peoples in their solidarity. The long-term goal of the proposed programme is, therefore, to create and consolidate, through the media, a peaceful environment conducive to a sustainable development in Africa. The programme also will support democratic institutions and local structures which promote a culture of peace and democracy through the media. Finally, it aims at promoting broad-based participation and involvement of civil society in the peace-building process and the consolidation of democracy.

47. In this regard, media programmes will be produced and disseminated especially to educate people, in particular women and youth, on their rights, and to facilitate their participation in the democratic process and the building of a peaceful society. Media programmes will also be produced and disseminated to provide basic information on democracy, tolerance and human rights.

48. These actions will be developed with the involvement of potential donors, UN agencies, African inter-governmental organizations and local professional associations. A number of countries (two or three) will be selected from each of the five major sub-regions in Africa (West, Central, Eastern, Northern and Southern Africa) according to criteria to be determined by a group of experts from the above international agencies and organizations.

49. UNESCO, in cooperation with UNICEF, UNDP and FAO, and in consultation with relevant African inter-governmental organizations, such as the OAU and the ECA, and regional as well as national organizations and professional associations, such as the Pan-African News Agency, the Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa, the Union of African Journalists, the Media Institute of Southern Africa and the Union of West African Journalists, will assist countries to formulate detailed Plans of Action.

50. The cost of this effort will be $7.8 million.

2. External Support for Africa's Economic Transition

51. This section consists of three priorities for the initiative which recognize that external support for Africa's development remains vital, but the nature of relations is changing. Ways of managing external economic relations must also change. On the debt side, as the UN Secretary-General yet again reported to the 26 June - 28 July 1995 at the High-Level Segment session of ECOSOC, "Africa's external debt continues to be a major impediment to the achievement of accelerated growth

and development." The consequence of thousands of debt negotiations has brought the realization not only that African states often must manage their debt better, but that even in the best of circumstances there must be added relief from bilateral and multilateral debt if the majority of indebted countries are ever to have a fair chance to develop.

52. On the trade front there are both (a) new opportunities to take advantage of a more liberal international system; and (b) new obligations by the multilateral system (World Trade Organization) and key trading partners with Africa to remedy damages in new and continuing trade practices. In the area of commercial activity (both trade and investment) there are opportunities for enhanced South-South cooperation with Africa. This set of issues and opportunities is addressed in the following three components of the Special Initiative.

a. Substantial Debt Relief

53. A combination of internal and external factors has precipitated Africa's debt problem and therefore a combination of internal and external remedies is appropriate. The debt overhang has been a disincentive for domestic and foreign investment and the return of flight capital and is thus a major constraint on development. There is a risk that the declining financial flows to Africa will be diverted to servicing external debt instead of contributing towards sustainable growth and development.

54. Africa's total debt stock stood at $313 billion in 1994. It is equivalent to 234 per cent of export income and to 83 per cent of GDP. For sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), total debt stock is $211 billion, equivalent to 255 per cent of export income. These ratios are high compared with the World Bank's indicators of debt sustainability, which is the net present value of debt-to-export-income ratio, of 200 per cent. Of the total debt stock in 1994, 40.6 per cent was bilateral debt; 21 per cent multilateral debt; and 19.5 per cent private debt. This debt burden was higher than that of any other region. Arrears on debt in sub-Saharan Africa were also higher than in other regions.

55. Eighty per cent of the 32 World Bank-defined severely indebted low-income countries (SILICs) are in sub-Saharan Africa. The number of SSA SILICs is increasing: an additional three sub-Saharan African countries currently have SILIC characteristics.

56. The structure of SSA's debt burden has shifted. Multilateral debt accounts for an increasing proportion of the total service, rising from 8 per cent in 1980, to 20 per cent in 1990 and estimated 41 per cent in 1994. This indicates a trend of increased necessity to borrow from multilateral institutions in the face of shrinking commercial sources of credit and investment. Debt servicing owed to commercial creditors, by contrast, declined from 78 per cent in 1980, to 60 per cent in 1990 and an estimated 35 per cent in 1994. The equivalent figure in the case of bilateral creditors was 14 per cent in 1980, rising to 20 per cent in 1990 and estimated 24 per cent in 1994. In sub-Saharan Africa, average per capita spending on debt servicing was $43, compared with $35 on education and health.

57. There are wide differences among African countries regarding the level and nature of their external debt. The World Bank reports that for sub-Saharan Africa, five countries account for nearly half the debt (Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan, Zaire and Angola). It also calculates that, on the other side of the ledger, 19 African countries have manageable debt burdens. Analysis of these same countries by UNDP comes to a similar conclusion. Whether World Bank or UNDP figures are used, for many African countries the debt situation is serious to the point of being unsustainable. The cases of debt management of countries emerging from conflict are particularly daunting. An important analysis of the debt problems and possible solutions is found in UNCTAD's 1995 *Trade and Development Report*.

58. Creditors have tackled the debt issue to some extent through (i) the cancellation or reduction of concessional bilateral debt; (ii) support to the IDA buy-back facility; and (iii) the approval of the Naples Terms in mid-December 1994. Despite these measures, external debt remains a major constraint to African development.

59. Even under the most optimistic assumptions, 24 African countries will continue to face a debt burden which is unsustainable – as defined by World Bank criteria – until well into the 21st century. Meanwhile, multilateral debt will continue to account for an increasing proportion of total scheduled repayments.

60. On numerous occasions major UN declarations have addressed the debt issue. The Secretary-General in his reports to the General Assembly has repeatedly expressed serious concern and offered solutions to the problem. The General Assembly has also adopted a number of resolutions on the issue. General Assembly Resolution A/49/727/Add.2 adopted on 19 December 1994 called for a comprehensive approach to the debt problem. The Copenhagen Social Summit's Declaration and Programme of Action in March 1995 empha-

sized the need for deeper debt relief measures. Commitment 7 of the Declaration called for innovative ways to use debt relief for funding development. These themes were amplified in the ECOSOC High-Level Segment discussions in July 1995.

61. African leaders have identified debt as a primary constraint to sustainable growth and development, even in countries which have undertaken stringent policy reform measures. They have, therefore, increasingly argued the case for a multipronged strategy to deal with the problem through various international forums and mechanisms. The June 1995 OAU Summit of African Heads of State and Government called for a debt strategy that would: (i) improve Naples Terms by (a) raising the debt stock reduction ceiling from 67 per cent to 80 per cent and in some cases higher; (b) apply the terms to all types of non-concessional Paris Club debt including post-cut-off debt and moratorium interest; (ii) remove all remaining concessional (grant) debt owed to the Paris Club; (iii) resolve the non-Paris Club debt burden; (iv) remove private sector debt through expansion where necessary of existing mechanisms such as the IDA debt buy-back facility and the Brady Plan; (v) support innovative measures to reduce the multilateral debt burden, building on proposals already made such as the sale of a proportion of the IMF's gold reserves and the issuance of additional SDRs; and (vi) seek actively to use debt relief to fund development.

62. Taking all this into consideration, a number of the specific actions for creditors, debtors and the UN system are advanced to utilize the moral authority of the Secretary-General to accelerate concrete measures.

63. (1) Creditor countries and institutions must find ways of enabling debtor countries to achieve sustainable debt servicing levels.

(a) It is recommended that Paris Club bilateral creditors (largely OECD creditors) be asked by the Secretary-General to consider once more reducing the burden of concessional and non-concessional debt on individual SILICs, especially in sub-Saharan Africa – for instance as part of its review of the implementation of the Naples Terms one year after their approval in December 1994, as was indicated could be done in the Paris Club Chairman's Summary dated 15 December 1994. A number of African partners have proposed that such an approach could include extending relief to cover all types of Paris Club non-concessional debt, removal of all remaining ODA concessional debt and reduction of all remaining private short- and long-term debt through the expansion of buy-back mechanisms. (UN system organizations which regularly attend the Paris Club, e.g., the World Bank and UNCTAD, may well serve as useful advocates for improved approaches.)

(b) Non-Paris Club bilateral creditors (largely the former Soviet Union, Arab countries and other developing countries) should be called upon by the Secretary-General to find solutions comparable to those of the Paris Club and to explore innovative ways of swapping or converting the debt owed to them. It is noted that UNCTAD is currently undertaking an in-depth analysis of debt owed by African countries to non-Paris Club creditors.

(c) Multilateral creditors would be urged by the Secretary-General and ACC members to apply innovative debt relief measures. There is a compelling case to reduce multilateral debt because the real burden of such debt is particularly high in two senses: it is a priority for repayment and constitutes a heavy share of actual debt repayments.

64. The World Bank is prepared to incorporate an analysis of debt sustainability in its country assistance strategies and, when necessary and as justified, implementation will use the IDA Debt Reduction Facility to retire commercial debt, to progressively replace IBRD debt with IDA debt and to provide IDA funds for gap-filling exercises which include debt repayment. Beyond these steps, additional actions are contemplated within the Bank and should be established promptly.

65. Notwithstanding the actions of the IMF in establishing its Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF), further steps are indicated. The Fund is reviewing its policies in this regard, including the proposal by the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer that IMF-held gold be sold to finance an extension of ESAF maturities and, possibly to, partially finance a new ESAF on the expiry of the present one. It is recommended that as part of this Initiative, the Secretary-General communicate with the Managing Director of the Fund to strongly encourage decisive actions by the Fund to reduce its burden on African economies.

66. The debt owed by African countries to the African Development Bank (ADB) is cause for particular concern. There is need to address the debt owed to the Bank by member countries in unsustainable debt situations. In early 1995 ADB adopted a new credit policy aimed at avoiding lending ADB monies to debt-distressed countries. This will go a long way towards correcting the institutional policies and practices which contributed to the debt problems of their borrowers and

will avoid contributing to a worsening of the debt situation of these countries. It is recommended that the weight of the Secretary-General's office be lent towards encouraging implementation of and effective international support for solutions involving more concessional terms. Other multilateral institutions including the Arab regional banks should also be asked to take appropriate steps. For these institutions there is a need, at a minimum, to establish IDA-type buy-back facilities to retire the unsustainable debt of African countries owed to them.

67. (2) Debtor countries. African debtor countries have a major responsibility to ameliorate their own debt problems through effective management of their debt, use of resources made available through debt relief for development purposes, and refraining from incurring new debt for unproductive purposes. They should be urged to formulate their debt relief strategies in this light and also within the framework of sound overall macroeconomic policies. These strategies should form part of the country's overall external resource mobilization strategy for accelerating development. They should be tailored to the specific development situation of each debtor country. Strategies should encompass the country's different types of debt and negotiate solutions with the individual creditors or creditor groups in an integrated way. Innovative ways of using debt to finance development through instruments such as conversions and swaps should be included. In sum, these new debt reduction strategies should aim to replace the hitherto creditor-driven and partial approach to the debt problem by an active and fully integrated, debtor-driven, country-specific approach. The debt relief strategies of individual debtor countries cannot be effective in themselves without the good will of their creditors.

68. (3) UN advocacy. The UN should have a more integrated and active advocacy strategy on Africa's debt which would include the following two elements:

69. First, the inclusion of individual countries' debt relief strategies in the agenda of existing aid coordination mechanisms — such as Roundtables and Consultative Groups — to ensure that they form an integral part of their external resource mobilization strategy. There are already precedents since 1992 for the Roundtable mechanism being used in this way without prejudicing other decision-making forums for debt relief.

70. Second, the Resident Coordinators' support to governments to present their debt reduction strategies as part of their overall external resource mobilization strategy and initiatives to develop capacity to manage these resources effectively.

71. Along these lines it is noted that UNDP and ADB are in discussion about having the first of a series of seminars among African decision-makers on improved strategies for debt management, updating information on creditor requirements, and including options for negotiation. These discussions are also expected to explore new potential common ground between debtors and creditors. It should also be noted that UNCTAD has accumulated a great deal of experience in its Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS), a computer-based debt management system which has already been installed in nine African countries. UNCTAD's system and experience are available to be added to the UNDP/ADB seminars.

72. Together, these envisaged creditor, debtor and UN advocacy actions can help lend force to resolving a key constraint to the development of a number of African countries.

b. Trade Access and Opportunities

73. In addition to a more sustainable debt situation, Africa's eventual way out of aid dependency is through trade and investment. While some assessments of the Uruguay Round indicate that Africa's long-term gains under the Round will offset its short-term losses, most believe that, at least in the short run, Africa's trade prospects will suffer and that the continent is likely to be further marginalized as a result of its implementation.

74. Over 75 per cent of the active population in Africa is engaged in the production and trade of commodities. Africa's exports have remained stagnant and by 1992, real commodity prices were virtually half their 1979-81 average levels. Export diversification is a key prerequisite if commodity-dependent African countries are to succeed in moving towards sustainable development. For a large number of African primary commodity-producing countries, both vertical and horizontal diversification into manufacturing to take advantage of the potential expansion of trade in manufactures will be a slow process. Those countries will probably gain only little from trade liberalization. Even in the relatively simple labour-intensive industries like clothing, where new producers are likely to emerge, a large gain for Africa is not assured in the next 10 years. These African countries could also find themselves among the least benefitted, partly because of the low price elasticity as well as the low income elasticity of demand for many primary commodities and partly because trade barriers to some of those commodities are already low.

75. To resolve this problem the issue is not growth in the export sector alone, but also in the rest of the economy. This, by implication, means that the economy has the capacity to

take advantage of the technology, it is an area where industrial policy has a role. Small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) are seen as a tool for overcoming rigidities that are inherent in large operations. Moreover, regional integration can be effective in generating infrastructure where economies of scale are important and the interest of participating countries is evident. But to that end, the involvement of the private sector from the start is necessary. Crucial to the growth of the entire economy and to trade in particular are well-functioning transportation and communications systems. Further development of these systems can only be encouraged.

76. African countries will need to capitalize on the new opportunities created by the Uruguay Round. They will also need to be supported in this regard through enhancement of their competitive capacities. A number of remedial steps are being considered by some bilateral trading partners of Africa, the outcome of which is not known at this time. In any case, there are three areas in which relevant agencies and organizations, particularly UNCTAD and WTO, with ITC, FAO, ECA, World Bank and others, as appropriate, can strengthen Africa's capacity to take better advantage of the new international trading environment:

(i) WTO announced to the recent ECOSOC meeting in Geneva that it intends to initiate a review in cooperation with other organizations to see how Africa can best take advantage of the new trading arrangements. (UNIDO has recently completed a study.) It is recommended that the Secretary-General encourage WTO to advise African states and the African business community on how African exports can be increased under the new regime and to initiate steps which can be undertaken to enhance the prospects for Africa's exports. Executive heads of UNCTAD and WTO have agreed that priority must be given to Africa in cooperation between the two institutions. In this regard, the two organizations, with other relevant organizations, will produce a plan of action to focus their collective efforts, including ways to increase Africa's export-oriented production and the improvement of export diversification and markets.

(ii) Efforts should be made to reduce or eliminate tariffs and trade practices harmful to Africa's trade prospects. A number of Africa's trading partners, notably the European Union, the US and Canada, are undertaking major reviews of their preferential tariff schemes. For example, the US Congress has mandated that the US Administration review its options to stimulate imports from Africa under its bilateral authorities. It is timely for the UN, through the Secretary-General to encourage such efforts to maximize trading opportunities for Africa. Preference-giving countries should extend the product coverage of GSP benefits to African countries, in particular to the LDCs, and provide access, free of duties, ceilings and quotas, to the latter. Stringent origin requirements should be relaxed. UNCTAD's technical assistance to these countries should enable them to make full use of GSP benefits, and strengthen national export promotion measures, supported by trade promotion agencies, of preference-giving countries.

(iii) Technical assistance to Africa by the WTO and other relevant agencies and organizations of the UN system should cover the following areas:

- *creating the new institutional national machineries required for the effective implementation of the Uruguay Round commitments;*
- *advising in the new areas of intellectual property, services, telecommunications, environment, labour, and legal advice on settling trade dispute;*
- *assistance in identifying new markets and marketing innovations to expand the range and competitiveness of African exports;*
- *assistance in restructuring and upgrading the productive sectors, foremost the industrial sector, in attaining international competitiveness especially through the development of scientific and technological innovations; and*
- *assistance and advice by WFP in the management of both external food aid and domestic food reserves, with a view to minimizing domestic price impacts of the Uruguay Round and maximizing the benefits of targeted food security interventions on behalf of vulnerable people.*

77. Africa has been marginalized in the flow of foreign direct investment (FDI). While such flows have considerably increased to developing countries in Latin America and Asia in particular, the share of Africa in FDI remains at less than 2 per cent of total flows despite efforts by African countries to increase their attractiveness to foreign investors. An UNCTAD study concludes that contrary to common perceptions, FDI in Africa can be profitable and at a level above the average in other developing regions.

78. In order to demonstrate the possibilities for investment in

Africa to potential foreign investors, the following is envisaged:

(i) A pilot project to be undertaken to prepare country profiles for investment in five selected African countries. This could be undertaken by UNCTAD in cooperation with UNIDO, UNDP, the World Bank, ECA, the African Development Bank, and other concerned organizations. (Cost estimate, US $200,000). Should this project prove to be effective, similar projects could be undertaken for other African countries; and

(ii) Potential investors and the business community could be invited on the occasion of Roundtable meetings in order to assess business opportunities in individual African countries. See also Part III. A.3, below.

c. Partnership with Africa through South-South Cooperation

79. South-South cooperation can play a significant role in strengthening Africa's development. It can hold enormous potential for Africa to capitalize on economic prosperity manifest in other regions of the developing world. South-South cooperation can be successful to the extent that concrete steps are being taken at the country level to forge such collaboration and to the extent that strong public-private linkages take place. The July 1995 High-Level Segment discussion at ECOSOC underscored the significance of South-South cooperation in improving Africa's development prospects. African countries and organizations, particularly the ECA, were urged to implement serious measures to advance such cooperation, particularly in the context of Africa-Latin America cooperation.

80. This priority seeks to facilitate such country-level cooperation through better linking Africa and other regions of the South. South-South cooperation offers unique opportunities for Africa in particular and the South in general to participate and compete in the new global trading system through the building of regional business, production and services ventures. It will also strengthen trade and financial links and the exchange of development experiences and scientific and technological innovations between Africa and the other regions of the South. For a number of years the UN has fostered South-South cooperation, stimulating inter-regional and national actions. Also notable are the South-South Commission, the Bandung Framework for Asia-Africa Cooperation (which sprung from an important October 1993 conference sponsored by the Government of Japan entitled Tokyo International Conference on African Development-TICAD), and efforts spearheaded by the OAU. It is timely to build on these.

81. Taking advantage of these opportunities from a private sector focus is of crucial importance for the success and sustainability of such efforts. Thus, this priority of the Initiative aims at mobilizing the collective strength and resourcefulness of the regional commissions, regional development banks, regional economic communities and major umbrella business and private sector organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America to achieve the following:

- *build and strengthen trade information systems and private sector networks between Africa and regions of the South;*
- *exchange of policy perspectives on a variety of globalization and development issues (involving both policy-makers and intellectual centres);*
- *strengthen financial intermediation between the regional banking systems;*
- *strengthen ties between the private sector communities in Africa and the other regions with a view to encouraging:*
  - *the flow of private investment into Africa;*
  - *the establishment of joint production, business and services ventures; and*
  - *the creation of modalities for the exchange of experiences between Africa and the other regions and transfer of knowledge to Africa on successful innovations in areas such as financial intermediation, information technology and scientific and technological applications for development; and*
- *promote and facilitate regular exchanges of available economic, financial, scientific, technical and technological information and experiences, particularly of the private sector.*

82. This endeavour would have the ECA – in cooperation with ECLAC, ESCAP, UNCTAD, and UNIDO – lead in encouraging cooperation along the above lines, particularly to encourage private sector linkages with Africa and in so doing to assist potential partners to flesh out the specific joint ventures and actions that need to be taken within the framework of this priority. The experience of agencies in South-South cooperation with Africa should be utilized, e.g., UNIDO's Techmart programme and its applications of Korean experience for Africa. African-based networks for information exchange and linkages would be strengthened as a core component of this priority. A sum of $10 million, over a period of five years, is the estimated requirement to support the entire programme.

3. Internal Resource Mobilization: Domestic Savings and Investment

83. This priority aims at mobilizing resources within African countries by stimulating domestic savings and investment. It would help redress the preoccupation of the international system with external balances to the relative neglect of internal resource mobilization opportunities.

84. Africa's development finance at the firm, community and national levels increasingly will need to shift to internal resources. even a foreign aid system intelligently redirected to the least developed countries, a more open and better utilized trade system and better debt relief cannot meet the total needs.

85. It is clear that in order to avoid economic compression, and ensure the sustainability of growth and development, a significant increase in the level of domestic African savings will be required. Domestic savings will also be important for many of the priorities of this Initiative. While there is legitimate concern that this should not be at the expense of needed consumption, there are substantial household savings in the economy outside formal channels which can be far better mobilized through a strengthened formal financial system and through reinforcing local mechanisms. In many African countries the banking system is very weak and in some it is bankrupt. Financial sector development will require an expansion of private lending mechanisms, a reduction in the dominance of state-owned banks, reduced government interference in the functioning of credit markets and removal of interest rate controls.

86. Domestic public savings have played a pivotal role in developments elsewhere where public surpluses have been channeled into the private credit market through appropriate monetary policy. In contrast, in many African countries government expenditures have far outstripped government revenues (for 30 countries fiscal deficits were 8.7 per cent of GDP in 1981-87 and 9.7 per cent in 1988-93) requiring a drain on savings from the rest of the economy. At about 28 per cent of GDP on average, government expenditures remain high by international norms. Governments should look to reducing public sector expenditures in non-core areas (such as productive and commercial activity through parastatals that the private sector can handle, and military expenditures) and to generating more revenues through improved taxation.

87. African governments are urged to establish policies encouraging the development of financial intermediation along lines which address the aforementioned problems. A World Bank study is well advanced towards providing a recommended approach. Also to be utilized will be a report of the Secretary-General (prepared by OSCAL/DPCSD) entitled "Financial Intermediation System and Practices in Africa" which was discussed at the 50th session of the General Assembly. The report proposed a three-pronged strategy of strengthening and promoting various banking and non-banking financial institutions, devising and launching a variety of financial instruments to meet requirements of savers and investors, and developing implementing instruments of indirect monetary policy.

88. Given the importance of the topic and significant ongoing work, UN agencies have agreed to consider measures to enhance domestic savings and investment once an action programme has been developed.

4. Harnessing Information Technology for Development

89. A number of African states, centers of commerce and learning in Africa, as well as public and private donors (including UNESCO, World Bank, ECA, UNDP, IDRC, ITU, UNCTAD, Carnegie Corporation of New York and USAID), have been actively working to expand information networking and telecommunications systems in Africa. In the course of this exercise, proposals have been submitted by the working group chaired by UNESCO and by ECA-World Bank. In some countries it is clear that the private sector will take the lead in developing information networking systems, but in others it may well take a combination of new policies and direct support by regional and international institutions to make networking a reality.

90. The rationale for such support is strong. Unless African countries become full actors in the global information revolution, the gap between the haves and have-nots will widen, opening the possibility of increased marginalization of the continent. On the other hand, participating in the information society offers tremendous opportunities for Africa to leapfrog over past development deficiencies into the future. African scientists and researchers can participate fully in the global scientific community through direct access to the Internet, the global network of networks. Throughout the region, particularly in rural areas, people will have dramatically increased access to communications and information, accelerating and bolstering sustainable development.

91. Education, health and trade as well as regional and international cooperation will be vastly strengthened by enhanced telematics infrastructure in the region – at modest investment costs compared to those of any other sector. An increased flow of information also will increase Africa's participation in the global dialogue on issues such as the environment, human rights and democratization.

92. Most of the current constraints to African entry into the global information society lie in the area of policy, human infrastructure and culture. African leadership must seize available opportunities and avoid increasing marginalization. It requires trained personnel to operate and utilize the new systems that will be introduced. Changes are also necessary in attitudes about information and its use – creating cultures that are information-hungry and information-sharing.

93. The ECA and the World Bank are both undergoing internal re-examination of their approaches to key strategic issues for the African continent, placing information technology high on their priority lists. Other donors (including USAID, IDRC and UNDP) are also interested in this field and will be involved. The World Bank has launched InfoDev as a global initiative to facilitate the access of developing countries to the information revolution. This activity is an African initiative that links up with InfoDev, the global initiative, and accelerates Africa's chances to take advantage of opportunities and to prepare to face the challenges of the information revolution. In joining ECA in an effort to harness information technology for development under this activity, InfoDev and the World Bank see an opportunity for great synergy. UNESCO, building on the Regional Informatics Network for Africa project of its Intergovernmental Informatics Programme, has been working closely with both the ITU and ECA to establish appropriate conditions to improve access to telematics facilities for development in Africa. The activity will address the following areas:

- *Awareness-raising: Securing the necessary policy reform for African participation in the Information Age through a series of national and regional efforts. Policy issues to be addressed include permitting information access and permitting private initiatives, where likely to flourish. Deregulation and privatization issues may be involved. Private sector interest should be assessed, and, as appropriate, involved in national consultations.*
- *Strategic analysis of opportunities and dangers: Providing forums for African leaders to promote dynamic change in this area; involvement of African stakeholders in the information revolution. Undertaking essential studies to reposition policies to facilitate African countries' participation in the information society.*
- *Increase connectivity: Setting up infrastructure for full Internet connectivity in pilot countries.*
- *Applications: Promoting the development and dissemination of user applications in key sectors to strengthen Africa's competitive position in the rapidly changing global economy. Special attention will be given to weaving in women's organizations and gender information.*
- *Training: Building capacities in Africa for computer networking and for using informatics in development decision-making and sectoral programmes.*

94. An estimated cost of $11.5 million would be involved. This programme would cover 20 countries in Africa. It is expected that an additional 20 countries will be covered under a project expected to shortly be approved by USAID.

95. The ECA, World Bank, UNESCO, ITU and UNCTAD, will work together as the lead agencies. Their first tasks will be to (i) establish their division of responsibilities, (ii) to involve other interested donors, and (iii) to establish a fully collaborative process with African governments. The International Development Research Centre (Canada), UNIDO, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Global Information Infrastructure Commission and the Internet Society (USA) have indicated their willingness to participate in all aspects of this endeavor. Other interested donors to be approached include UNDP, USAID, and development assistance agencies in countries such as France, Germany, Italy and Japan. The World Bank Economic Development Institute, working with the Institute of Development and Economic Planning (IDEP), sponsored by the ECA, would be the major facilitators for awareness raising and training. The initiative would work in close co-operation with the Africa Internet Forum. African countries which have taken a catalytic role in this area would join a Steering Committee for the project; these include Egypt, Senegal and South Africa. In the field of telecommunications, efforts will concentrate on strengthening what has so far been achieved by African countries.

96. Implementation of this priority will entail the following:

- *national policy and sectoral workshops to intensify policy dialogue on regulatory frameworks;*
- *regional commission on information technology and communications;*
- *installation of Internet nodes with local servers, to*

provide Internet services through very small aperture terminals (VSATs, or small satellite earth stations) in eight countries;

- *training systems engineers and operators and information users throughout Africa in computer networking;*
- *applications development and dissemination, drawing upon UNIDO's experience especially in applying informatics to industry; and*
- *establishment and operation of an electronic clearinghouse on African development information.*

97. Operating principles will include: encouragement of competitiveness and African private sector development in information service provision; necessity of policy reform in telecommunications deregulation to permit competitiveness and private sector participation in the provision of value added services and the licensing of VSATs; utilization of local resources and established information bases; encouragement of South-South cooperation through repatriation of skills of Africans trained abroad, and technical assistance from other developing countries with experience in this area.

B. New Hope for the Upcoming Generation

98. The pedigree of agreed international actions to help the basic social and economic condition of Africa's peoples is impeccable: from Alma Ata through Jomtien, Copenhagen, Cairo and Beijing, the world community has gathered, with increasingly compelling evidence, to ratify how important social development and sustained livelihoods are to the continent. This Initiative may well be the moment to be decisive in moving to effective implementation of the two key components of these commitments: basic education and basic health. Not only are these areas of action fundamental to development, they form the bedrock of hope that the next generation will progress from the current level of development.

99. Successful mobilization of considerable resources will be necessary for both the education and health priorities. As experience has demonstrated (for example, the Donors for African Education group, the African Population Advisory Committee and the Special Programme for African Agricultural Research), the creation of regional sectoral forums is an effective mechanism for mobilizing resources and to resolve important issues of common interest to donors and governments.

100. This section also includes important priorities in the field of employment and sustainable livelihoods, as part of the follow-up to a core issue of the World Summit for Social Development and many other forums.

101. The actions delineated in this section have particular significance for bringing about nothing less than a gender revolution in Africa. Empowerment of Africa's women through education, improved health and access to resources has constructive and fundamental implications for all African society. While these actions will not automatically remove discrimination and gender gaps, they are necessary towards that end. The implications for economic development, demographic growth and human welfare are clear.

5. Basic Education for All African Children

102. A major endeavour of the Initiative seeks to ensure that all African children are provided with basic education within one decade. It is the most ambitious component of the Initiative, hence it is given the most detailed presentation.

Justification

103. Since the 1990 Jomtien conference, slow but steady progress towards education for all has been made in most regions of the world. Africa is the one outstanding exception. The downward trend in enrolment experienced in many African countries, during the 1980s has not been reversed. Repetition rates are higher in Africa than in any other region of the world, retention is poor, quality reportedly low and the gender gap high, the percentage of girls enrolled often over 20 percentage points less than that of boys.

104. Undoubtedly, international support has been sensitive to the difficulties Africa has been facing in the field of education. Billions of dollars have been mobilized for education during the last decade through donor agencies — both multilateral and bilateral. There is a need, however, to analyze closely the results of these efforts and why they have been unavailing. Could it be possible to draw the conclusions from this observation that the international solidarity has been below the critical mass needed or that the resources allocated have not been utilized efficiently? These questions in turn highlight the need to find a new and more effective modality of collaboration and partnership with the states of Africa.

105. It is well recognized that education is crucial for the economic development, human welfare and societal advancement of Africa. This is the lesson that emerges from Asia where rising

investments in the 1960s and 1970s in primary and secondary education helped lay the foundation for the export-oriented growth that followed. In a comparison of sub-Saharan African and East Asian high-performing countries, education proved to be the major source of the regional differences in growth.

106. Studies in Africa reveal social rates of return of 24 per cent for primary education, 18 per cent for secondary education and 11 per cent for higher education. This priority of the Initiative focuses on the highest rate of return segment of education, recognizing that its success will add helpful pressure to improve secondary and tertiary educational systems.

107. The globalization of the economy and the lowering of barriers to international trade in recent years have made education more crucial for Africa. Africa may find itself marginalized if it cannot compete in tradable goods and services. But this does not hinge anymore on the provision of cheap, unskilled labour. Success requires improvement of productivity and high performance systems. Perhaps the most important element here is the foundation of basic education that workers receive and the effect it has on their flexibility and adaptability in the work place.

108. Despite the critical importance of education, about half of African adults are illiterate. The average man has less than three years of schooling and the average woman about one year. Clearly, this means that a large proportion of the labour force is virtually unprepared to contribute to development and benefit from it. Due attention should be given to skills training for unemployed urban youth, and to adult literacy programmes and appropriate measures to sustain literacy through different aspects of non-formal education. If present educational trends persist, the number of illiterate or under-educated adults will grow, as a high proportion of children do not attend primary school.

Objectives

109. The first step, therefore, towards a long-term solution to this vicious circle of illiteracy is to provide quality basic education for all. This would gradually reduce the number of illiterates, produce students well prepared for further education, and provide the people with basic knowledge and skills.

110. The World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien) 1990; the Children's Summit, 1990; the Cairo Population Conference, 1994; and the Social Summit, 1995, all called on the world community to take up the challenge of providing primary education for all children within the next decade (or sooner). African governments and societies have committed themselves to this objective. But is this objective of primary education for all attainable? What will it take to achieve basic education for all within the next decade? To attain this objective, a careful mix of strategic actions is required, including those aimed at transforming the formal, but also non-formal, education system such that it is equitable, accessible, and of high quality and relevance.

111. The challenge varies greatly across sub-Saharan Africa, and some countries are almost there. There is another handful of countries where Education For All (EFA), with universal primary enrolment in education systems of an acceptable level of quality, appears to be within relatively easy reach, requiring enrolment growth, of no more than 3 or 4 per cent each year. In more than 20 African countries, on the other hand, annual enrolment growth in excess of 6 per cent would be required to reach Schooling For All (SFA) within a decade, and in a dozen countries, growth rates in excess of 10 per cent annually would be required. In principle, even these latter rates would not be impossible to attain. Zimbabwe, for example, achieved an average annual growth of 12.4 per cent during the first half of the 1980s. Furthermore, Africa as a whole achieved an annual growth rate of primary enrolments of nearly 8 per cent during the decade of the 1970s. Very special efforts will be made to assure full enrolment of girls.

112. A simulation model was used to calculate the cost of achieving EFA, taking into consideration three years of reform measures. On the basis of this simulation, and given a willingness to implement the policy reforms, 11 countries would be able to meet the costs of EFA provided that real spending on education increased at least as fast as their population over the period 1990-2005. Even with this sustained increase, another 24 countries would still incur combined deficits of around $16 billion. This deficit could be reduced to around $10 billion if the proportion of the recurrent budget allocated by each country to education were increased by 2 percentage points, and kept constant over the years to 2005.

Strategy

113. The objective is daunting but doable. What is required is a strategy that is driven by the countries themselves, supported by a coordinated multi-agency commitment, and sustained by an agreement among all on a stable and long-term basis. Such a strategy should hinge upon supporting the nations of Africa in building and sustaining their national capacities: financial, human and institutional.

114. The strategy is premised on agreement by all concerned on basic principles:

- *EFA is primarily the business of each country; it can only be achieved through the leadership and action from within. Donors, foundations and others must play a supportive role.*
- *Education is a societal business (involving communities and parents, NGOs and others), and not only the business of government. This requires education planners to be in touch with wide spectrums of society, including responsible planners in agriculture and industry.*
- *Educational planners have tended to focus on the supply aspects and not enough on demand. While it is true that books, trained teachers and facilitators are in short supply, there is serious wastage. More importantly, the lack of demand from parents and communities is perceived to reflect an irrelevance of educational content or a neglect to stimulate this demand.*
- *Special emphasis must be placed on those most likely to be deprived of education, in particular girls and women, and those groups traditionally unreached.*

115. In light of the above, the strategy is to encourage countries in Africa to make a societal and long-term commitment to the goal of education for all, and to undertake the necessary capacity building and resource reallocations to achieve it, knowing that the international community is prepared to act in unison to support them through a long-term compact. In essence, a greater share of Africa's GNP and of donor resources is needed to support education in Africa.

116. The Special Initiative on education for all African children can serve precisely as a catalyst for the above strategy. For many countries, as discussed above, after all local mobilization, reallocation and efficiency measures are exhausted, a substantial flow of aid will still be required. What is needed is an assistance programme (similar to the Special Programme of Assistance (SPA) for Africa) that has the following characteristics:

- *A group of donors will agree to support, for an extended period, the financial gaps of qualifying country programmes for the attainment of basic education for all. It must be clear that host countries remain firmly in the driver's seat.*
- *Donors will commit such support for the duration of the implementation of the country programme. For some countries this may be reflected in a level of expenditure that does not appear to be self-sustainable, in order to reach the higher level of economic growth in subsequent decades, when it would be able to sustain such expenditure on its own.*
- *Financing will not be only for capital expenditure but will also cover recurrent expenditure, which makes up the bulk of budgetary requirements. In particular, there will be investment in human resource development and institutional capacity enhancement.*
- *Donors participating in this programme should agree not to finance major activities in basic education that would represent a significant deviation and distraction from the multi-agency agreed principal programme, without full consultations led by government.*
- *Resources committed to this programme need not be additional. They may be redirected resources within the total aid package for Africa.*

117. For countries to benefit from this programme, they need to:

- *Formulate, commit to, and activate a broad-based and valid plan of action (including strategies, measures and sources of financing) to attain the objective of primary education for all. This plan must be well embedded in a prudent strategic and financial policy framework; and,*
- *Demonstrate a human and institutional ability to implement the plan of action.*

118. Whenever a country lacks the planning and institutional capacity to be a beneficiary from this special programme, donors should be ready to focus their support on a significant institution-building and training effort that is necessary to enable the country to design and implement the EFA programme. Related to this is the need to develop and intensify professional linkages between international organizations and countries, as well as among countries, to broaden the base of policy research and experience. Without this exchange, countries will continue to work in isolation, encountering many problems already addressed by their peers.

Resource Requirements

119. The $10 billion deficit mentioned above in paragraph 112 in connection with the objective represents an absolute minimum estimate considering the needs of 34 countries for external resources required over the years to 2005. Aid would

need to be greater than that to the extent that a larger number of countries is involved, to the extent that countries were unable to introduce all the efficiency reforms, that the rates of economic growth were lower than expected, or that the required budgetary reallocations towards education were not achieved. It would be safe to assume, then, that additional aid needed by the countries of sub-Saharan Africa over the next 10 to 15 years would amount to around $15 billion, or some $1.25 to $1.5 billion annually.

120. In the initial year or so, when the initiative starts to engage the first set of countries, the annual requirement may not immediately be as large. Also, as countries take on ownership and commitment of this initiative, internal efficiencies, innovative alternatives, and greater internal budgetary allocations will correspondingly reduce the requirement in the countries involved.

Coordinating Mechanisms

121. A joint interagency and country-selected steering team (with a small secretariat) modeled after the structure for the Jomtien Conference, working in close cooperation and consultation with other existing bodies and the Special Initiative follow-up mechanism, may be set up to mobilize resources, prepare the annual assistance programmes, and direct pre-investment support to countries committed to EFA which need help in capacity building and formulation of plans of action.

Next Steps

122. • *Pilot arrangement*: The World Bank, UNICEF, and UNESCO will intensify their collaboration with a limited number of countries to: (a) develop respective broad-based and valid plans of action to attain EFA as described above; and (b) to build the necessary human and institutional capacity to implement the plans. Other funding and assistance agencies will be invited to participate in this pilot activity.

123. • *Technical Support and Advocacy*: A task force (World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNDP and WHO) that could, inter alia, operate within the Special Initiative follow-up framework, will work out, in consultation with the Association for Development of African Education (DAE) – which is a coalition of donors and African education ministers – mechanisms to assist countries at the pre-investment stage with data, experiences, analytical tools, technical support and opportunities for cross-country exchange of knowledge and expertise. The interest of WFP to include its support of basic education and health through its feeding through schools programmes is noted. The task force is urged to incorporate this interest and experience. The task force can also resolve any conceptual questions as well as ensure that innovative ways are found to maximize efficiencies in educational systems to lower costs and extend outreach to rural areas. Among the questions to be considered would be inclusion of education for adolescents and vocational education and the relationship of agreed programmes to the stimulation of the entire education sector. The task force should work out arrangements to involve a wide range of partners, including NGOs, in the implementation of this priority. It should also factor in ways to mobilize demands for education, including consideration of campaigns to encourage enrolment of children, particularly girls.

124. Genuine progress towards EFA will be possible only if countries have not just the technical expertise, but more importantly the political will and public commitment to this goal. Therefore, steps should be taken to stimulate and encourage countries to evaluate their own commitment and present themselves as partners to this programme.

125. • *Resource Mobilization*: The World Bank will invite all donors (possibly through the SPA mechanism) to mobilize their support for this initiative and work out detailed arrangements for assistance.

6. Health Sector Reform

126. The health situation in Africa is cause for both satisfaction and moral outrage. Satisfaction because life-spans have increased significantly, in part because Africa has been prime beneficiary of a number of health initiatives. But outrage because preventable death, suffering and loss in human potential are still unacceptably high. A major priority is proposed for the Initiative in order to raise significantly the standard of health in Africa.

127. The major vehicle to achieve significant health improvement under the Initiative will be health sector reform in all countries in Africa. Three major common elements of the reform are improved financial resource mobilization and allocation, improved management of health services and resources and increasing equity to help even the last village achieve a reasonable degree of health.

128. The most important condition for the success of health sector reform is country ownership of both the reform process and programme. The reform needs to ensure an adequate access by all populations to an essential level of care and support services and result in the resolution of country-specific pri-

only health problems.

129. Reform of the health sector will strengthen the capacity of health systems and communities to reduce, on a sustainable basis, priority causes of morbidity and mortality, for example, malaria, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis and childhood illnesses. This would be done through strengthening and increasing Africa's existing 40,000 (approximately) primary health facilities.

130. Sustainability requires partnership between communities and health care providers, availability of essential drugs, and training of health workers and communities. Reliable information will be essential for monitoring and evaluation as well as for improved decision-making. In undertaking health sector reform, health improvement targets will be established and monitored in specific areas, based on internationally agreed health goals.

131. Implementation of the health sector reform strategy will be facilitated by setting up appropriate mechanisms at global, regional and country levels. The cost of implementing the strategy, as estimated by the World Bank, is $1.6 billion per year, additional to what is already being spent, if, as intended, all countries are engaged in active programmes for better health. The donor share would come to about $650 million per year, an increase of about 50 per cent over 1990 for the next ten years.

132. The World Bank will facilitate the donor financing for the Initiative. WHO's draft policy for health sector reform in Africa will facilitate the detailed planning and implementation of the Initiative.

7. *Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods*

a. Poverty Reduction through the Promotion of the Informal Sector and Employment-generating Opportunities

133. In Africa the informal sector accounts for about 60 per cent of the labour force and 20 per cent of the GDP. It makes a significant contribution to poverty alleviation through employment generation and is a major source of human resource development, both as a training ground for unskilled workers and as a reservoir for entrepreneurial capacity. Women represent the majority of informal sector participants and they shall be specific targets of this priority.

134. Virtually every major international conference concerned with social development and with Africa's development has underscored the need to support and strengthen Africa's informal sector. Recognizing this, ideas and interest on the subject have been registered from UNDP, ECA, ILO, World Bank, IFAD, FAO, DPCSD, WFP, UNIDO and UNESCO. The World Bank has taken the lead in establishing a global Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP) to raise $200 million for micro-credit, coordination and peer learning.

135. IFAD and UNCDF have particularly valuable experience to offer in crafting micro-credit policies in Africa, with on-the-ground experience in a number of countries and the creation of a forum on best practices in credit to the poor established with the African Regional Agricultural Credit Association.

136. The primary approach required to address this area must be through broad measures, since direct assistance to individuals can only benefit a portion of those in need. Even then, supply-led measures must also be augmented by measures to increase the demand for employment in the informal and small- and medium-scale enterprises. Improvements in both sides of the supply-demand equation are needed for a better enabling environment for sustainable livelihoods.

137. This Initiative includes a strategy aimed at strengthening the informal sector and the generation of productive and remunerative jobs through: strengthening the technical capacity of African national planning authorities in the area of employment policy formulation and planning; improved access to sustainable financial services, equipment and technology; skills development and entrepreneurial training; promotional and marketing services; infrastructural facilities; and an enabling institutional and legal framework for the development and expansion of the informal sector. (As analysis by UNCTAD has amply demonstrated, these factors are interrelated and result in expansion of employment and reduction of poverty.) Employment-intensive development programmes in the urban informal and rural sectors also should be considered not only as a means of job creation in the short run, but also as a means of asset creation for poorer segments of the population. The link between training and productive employment in both formal and informal sectors should be specifically emphasized through the development of improved vocational and technological skills training. This should all be done in a gender-sensitive way. It is proposed that infrastructural improvements to reach the rural and urban poor be covered by multilateral development banks and bilateral donors. Technical assistance would be provided by various UN agencies, other donors and experienced NGOs.

138. A meeting consisting of interested agencies, noted above, plus ADB and DDSMS, will be organized to refine this activity in light of an expected DPCSD report and the new Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest, including arriving at an agreed division of labour.

139. The interest of so many members of the international system in micro-credit is an asset which should not be lost. A specific section of the agenda of the above-suggested meeting should be devoted to a consultation on micro-financing both for the informal sector and the rural sector. This might well be useful if key African and other NGOs expert in this field, together with a selection of interested governments and key donors (particularly IFAD and the World Bank), were to see what might be done to expand the incentives for micro-finance as well as the capacities of intermediating institutions. Credit for women is a specific challenge and opportunity for this activity, particularly if the strengths of women's organizations are utilized. Indeed, if patterns elsewhere hold true in Africa, women should be the main beneficiaries of this priority. In this exercise, IFAD would draw on its knowledge in integrating non-institutional finance and is prepared to act as a resource centre and seminar-organizer on the experience of agencies with a history of assisting micro-finance in rural Africa.

140. A careful planning exercise should take place leading to a major expansion of activity in this area. Initial discussions on organizing a planning exercise could take place at a meeting of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest. After further work, this element of the Special Initiative will be budgeted and implementation plans forwarded to the Steering Committee.

b. Sustainable Livelihoods in Environmentally Marginal Areas

141. Poor people's strategies can inform policy, and can assist in arriving at alternative models of poverty eradication and ecological renewal which place human well-being centrally. Poor people in different locales have information which, if shared laterally, can be beneficial. This is the essence of promoting sustainable livelihoods by building on local adaptive strategies.

142. The "sustainable livelihoods" approach places centrally the long-term survival strategies which people already have in place, especially with respect to the management of their environments. It tends to validate the local knowledge systems upon which these strategies are based, and does not merely attempt to replace them with "modern" techniques. Thus, these approaches tend to encourage participatory methodologies in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes as they draw upon the wisdom of what poor people already know and practice.

143. Research has been ongoing in five sub-Saharan African countries on adaptive strategies in rural communities in arid and semi-arid agro-ecological zones. The research has identified how people deliberately choose the mix of productive activities at the individual, household and community levels, to provide a means of living. Adaptive strategies are found which are based on local knowledge of a given locale and which evolves/adapts in response to changes in social, economic and policy conditions, the natural resource base, etc. These are not coping strategies, but more fundamental changes in livelihood systems which are typically vulnerable.

144. It is the intent of this activity to ensure the widespread operationalization of the use of the adaptive approach to achieving sustainable livelihoods in African countries. It aims at sharing knowledge at the local, national and international levels and to identify ways which adaptive strategies can be fostered and also can be utilized in policy formulation. The activity would utilize insights and information gained from the current research by using existing centres in countries of research as centres of competence within and between countries. This approach has recently been reviewed with and is supported by five resident representatives and by WFP and IFAD. Implementation of the process of policy and community-based action leading to sustainable livelihoods in the existing five study countries is estimated to cost about $8 million over the next five years.

C. Strengthening the Capacity for Governance

145. Enhancing the capacity for governance is critical to the process of enabling Africans to fulfill their political, economic and social aspirations. In this Initiative three ways of strengthening the capacity for governance are included: peace-building through strengthening the OAU and civil society roles (which appeared in this presentation under section A.1), and the actions contained in this section pertaining to (a) expanding the capacities for transparent, responsible and effective governance, and (b) strengthening civil society in two envisaged interventions, described below.

5. *Expanding the Capacities for Transparent, Responsible and Effective Governance*

146. Achieving sustainable growth and development in Africa requires greatly enhanced effectiveness in governance. In recent times, African countries have become more sensitized and have taken a number of steps to improve the quality of governance. Their leadership of this process creates an important opportunity for accelerating internal improvements even more and for mobilizing an enhanced level of reinforcing external support.

147. The aim of this priority is to strengthen the capacities of government-devised programmes to improve transparent, accountable and efficient governance. This includes support for the following areas: i) strengthening the capacities of civil service systems and the women and men in them for the effective management of development; ii) strengthening the rule of law in governance, particularly independent judicial systems; iii) support and strengthening of parliamentary functions and electoral processes; iv) making the machinery of public administration more accountable especially in the area of budgetary allocation for public investments and revenue collection; v) assisting countries to strengthen the opportunities for the development of pluralistic forces in their societies including civil organizations, labour and women; and vi) strengthening the flow of public information and opportunities of public dialogue on development policies and programmes. A number of organizations in the UN system are currently involved in aspects of these tasks. As an example, UNDP has been supporting a number of regional projects which have been instrumental either in defining governance strengthening measures or operationalizing them. In the former category are support for three major activities which are described herein as the kind of work which will be expanded under this priority.

- ***The Africa Leadership Forum:*** *The aim of the Forum is to identify and address key public policy issues at the core of governance questions in Africa. It does this through conferences and publications involving leading African public actors and others;*
- ***Governance Strategy for Africa:*** *The project is to identify rules of good governance and to optimize the efforts of national and international organizations in addressing key governance issues. This activity has been linked in some countries with the preparation of National Long Term Perspective Studies; and*
- ***Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa:*** *This project provides opportunities for representatives of African governments to work out regional arrangements on peace, security, stability and development in Africa. Close cooperation with the OAU aimed at implementing these activities is a feature of the project.*

148. Operational activities have been in three areas: (i) comprehensive civil service reform has featured downsizing, cost containment and management skills training and development in an effort to streamline and re-engineer government to increase the quality and cost-effectiveness of public services; (ii) judicial reform has been carried out in a few countries to enhance the efficiency, independence, accountability and credibility of whole justice systems; and (iii) electoral assistance responding to requests from 34 countries has been provided in the establishment and maintenance of civil electoral registers, electronic data processing, vote-counting technologies, and legal and logistic information.

149. This priority calls for enhancing the level of resources that would be targeted to this area as well as ensuring more effective coordination in the delivery of support (e.g., through coordinated activities at the country level). It would expand existing programmes and add new creativity in enhancing the performance of the public sector. For example, in the area of pay, productivity and public service, a study recently released by UNIDO/UNDP made concrete suggestions to reverse the erosion of the delivery of core services by most African civil services in the short and medium term. The study proposed tradeoffs between strengthening the support to civil services and the higher aggregate cost of technical assistance.

150. There is also an opportunity for adding a human resource management side of this activity to augment public health work on management of HIV/AIDS issues, an increasing concern of public and private employers in Africa, and a crisis in at least five African countries. There are basic implications for training, redefinition of tasks and management processes, promotion structures, pension and other welfare claims on the public sector, education on factors influencing the risks of HIV transmission (concerned with occupation and other risks), etc. Reforms in public and private sector practice are indicated to promote public health and to assure the survival of the workforce.

151. A sum of $500 million is required over the next five years to finance the expansion of this effort. UNDP will organize this expansion of activity in cooperation with the ECA, the World Bank, UNHCHR, other relevant UN agencies and the many bilateral donors and NGOs active in this field.

9. Strengthening Civil Society for Development (including Peace-building)

152. One of the most vibrant and promising developments in

Africa in recent years has been the rise of pluralism in numerous parts of the continent, most often led or spurred by civil society. This movement is of fundamental importance to promoting development and peace-building in Africa. Backing this movement is an investment in the future. The alliances between the UN system and civil society have been strengthening, not to bypass the state, but to expand the means and likely success of the development which states have promised their peoples. UN conferences have been international hallmarks of this collaboration. Within Africa, both the ECA and UNDP are widely seen as the most active in promoting civil society.

153. This effort involves strengthening the capacity of civil society in development in all countries in Africa and strengthening the capacity of selected civil society organizations (CSOs) in peace-building, conflict resolution and national reconciliation. Special attention will be given to women's organizations and to those organizations which promote and ensure protection of human rights.

154. A series of actions would be taken so that in each African country: (a) public policy is enriched by participation with civil society; (b) civil society is a more active partner in development; and (c) ties between nationally-based civil society entities and regional and global groups are strengthened. A four-point programme is envisaged involving: (i) an effort to enhance the legal space and further the fostering of civil society in each African country; (ii) regular stock-taking of the opportunities for advancing civil society and the state of civil society in Africa; (iii) a significant Africa-wide resource centre on civil society to link existing CSOs into an active network for the service of their constituencies and communities; and (iv) encouragement and, if necessary, support of civil society participation in African national delegations, especially for key UN conferences. In addition, it is recommended that a request be made to all Resident Coordinators in Africa to consult with local CSOs and be responsive to funding at least one new project to strengthen civil society along the above lines. It is noted that the term civil society is intended to include all major manifestations of organized association, including employers' and workers' organizations.

155. The peace-building component of this effort is based upon the experience of civil society in Africa which confirmed its high utility as a force for peace. In South Africa and the Horn, NGO leadership has managed important peace initiatives. This has led to a recognition that a well-informed and mobilized civil society has a major role to play in promoting peace as a complementary reinforcement of official actions to build peace.

156. It is intended that specialized nodes be established and/or strengthened in existing NGO centres, initially in three sub-regional locations, to promote conflict prevention and the constructive resolution of conflicts and the underpinnings of national reconciliation and peace from the perspective of CSOs. The centres are intended to coordinate actions and to be catalytic agents through providing education and training in three areas fundamental to long-term peace-building: democracy, human rights including the free expression of views, and conflict prevention and resolution. Each will have a panel of mediators on call; foster research on issues of democracy, human rights and conflict resolution, including research on indigenous approaches to conflict resolution; promote country Social Contracts for Peace; and be centres for publication and documentation holdings. An important feature of this priority will be the involvement of women in peace-building: women are the primary victims of civil insecurity, but are only rarely factored into creating solutions to insecurity.

157. These centres will be important linkage points for public and private organizations within Africa, the UN and with international peace, democracy and human rights NGOs. A model for the three centres already exists in the form of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), which is actively involved in all these activities in the southern African sub-region. UNDP is supporting a similar initiative in West Africa through the African Institute for Democracy. The ECA is already contributing funds for elaborating a project document which will detail the institutional and substantive requirements to establish a centre in the Horn of Africa through the InterAfrica Group, and is in dialogue with UNDP and other potential supporters of these centres.

158. All parts of the UN system are called upon to reinforce collaboration and promotion of civil society. The ECA will, in cooperation with UNDP, UNESCO, and other UN and regional as well as international partners, organize this activity. The support by WFP in food-for-work programmes involving civil society is noted. The lead agencies should explore incorporation of WFP's interest in playing a supportive role in fostering civil society through participatory approaches to relief and rehabilitation.

159. The total cost of the centre and the peace-building activities is estimated to be $8 million over five years.

D. Urgency on Survival Issues

160. In this section we discuss the Special Initiative's compo-

nents on food security and on water, based on the submissions of specialized working groups. Food and water security is necessary (but not sufficient) to address the nexus of food, environment and population, which together may well result in the most formidable challenge faced by Africa in the modern era. Simply put, the continuity of long-term environmental and food production trends would be a disaster in Africa. Fortunately, new focus is being given to food security, e.g., this year food security is the theme of the inter-agency Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), and FAO will hold a summit on food issues in 1996. In this section we are concerned with matters well beyond simple survival, but we must at least ensure survival through sustainable and rewarding production. Each of the seven priorities presented below touches on extremely important areas of potential activity. It is suggested that each has the possibility of increasing scope and significance.

161. It is again worth stressing that the Special Initiative is not a complete approach to Africa's development needs. It is additive. In the area of survival issues, for example, the United Nations is in the forefront of meeting emergency needs, saving and sustaining lives today so that development can take place tomorrow. The work of WFP, UNHCR and DHA is indispensable in this, as has been shown repeatedly in Africa. (But the increasing frequency of droughts and disasters has led to necessary changes in allocations, in the case of WFP from a 60:40 ratio of relief to development in 1990 to a 90:10 ratio in 1994.) Taking advantage of these proven systems of emergency response and while agencies work to ensure mutually reinforcing linkages between life-sustaining assistance and the longer-term enlargement of development opportunities for all members of society, the Special Initiative will concentrate on the longer-term development issues of water and food security. Emergencies have shown how vulnerable are the poorest as well as women and children in general. Their security is at stake in the following priorities.

10. Food Security and Drought Management

162. Africa, which was a net food exporter, has become a net importer since the early 1960s. Per capita food production has declined because the population has been growing faster at an average rate of 3.0 per cent per annum than food production, which has been increasing at an average rate of 2 per cent per annum. The causes of slow growth in food production include political instability and civil wars; low priority to agriculture in general and food production in particular, which receives around 10 per cent of government's public spending; the low status of women who produce the bulk of food; and land degradation, droughts and desertification. The capacity to import the balance to meet total food requirements has been constrained by the external debt problem.

163. Since the 1970s, African economies have performed poorly. Unemployment has increased drastically. Consequently, a large share of the African population has become absolutely poor. A combination of food shortages and poverty (the ability to access food and afford food prices) has led to serious food insecurity. During the 1980s, average daily caloric intake was 87 per cent of requirements. Forty per cent of the population does not have enough food. Hunger and undernutrition are widespread, particularly among children and women. The number of the undernourished has nearly doubled from around 100 million to nearly 200 million since the late 1960s. The incidence of food insecurity is more severe in rural areas where 90 per cent of Africa's poor live.

164. African governments have individually and/or collectively responded to the serious food insecurity situation by introducing a number of measures and programmes such as:

- *Policy reforms: economic and institutional reforms have been undertaken to give incentives to farmers through price, trade and foreign exchange liberalization; land tenure; empowering women; promotion of the role of private sector in food production and other measures;*
- *Enhancing production, distribution and storage of food: research on modern and traditional technologies to increase crop yields and livestock productivity; strengthening extension services to reach a larger communities of small farmers; improvement of input supply services and credit facilities; improvement in transport and communications; minimization of food losses through improved processing and storage facilities;*
- *Establishment of national and regional famine early warning mechanisms; creation of institutional activities for responding to crises, such as relief and rehabilitation commissions; the creation of emergency food reserves; and improvements in vulnerability assessments aimed at better targeting most needy regions and households for humanitarian assistance;*
- *Protection and enhancement of the productivity of the natural resource base that constitutes for many African countries the capital for economic and social development;*
- *Regional and sub-regional cooperation: regional efforts have included the Lagos Plan of Action in*

1980, the African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery in 1985, the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community and recently OAU Resolution AHG/RES.244 (XXXI) on Food Security and Agricultural Development in Africa in 1995;

- *Governance and enabling environment: advances in political reforms through democratization and good governance in terms of more decentralized, more transparent and accountable, more rural-biased and more participatory approaches; and*
- *Poverty alleviation and alternative livelihood systems particularly to address the needs of the urban poor and those living in dry, marginal areas; employment creation especially for rural women.*

165. While these efforts may have encouraged the need for giving priority to food production, distribution and purchase, the food situation in Africa continues to be alarming. According to an FAO study, *Agriculture: Towards 2010*, the prospects for the continent do not look bright. The number of chronically undernourished is projected to increase by another 100 million by the year 2010. The pressure on land, vegetation and water supplies has made Africa increasingly prone to food security crises. Emergency responses, though increasingly effective, are costly and cannot be a sufficient global response. Increased emphasis also must be made on longer-term solutions to reduce the vulnerability of the poor, particularly women (who produce the bulk of the food), to recurrent droughts. To complement on-going efforts, especially those designed to meet the long-term food security challenges of the continent and to ensure the environmentally sound management of water resources, the priority is to cover the following areas:

- *Land degradation and desertification control;*
- *Soil quality improvement; and*
- *Food security with special emphasis on women.*

a. Land Degradation and Desertification Control

166. Africa is a continent suffering from degradation of its natural resources base through: overcropping without supply of the appropriate inputs to the land; overgrazing; and deforestation. Tropical forests in Africa are being lost at a rate of more than 4 million ha., or 0.7 per cent of the total forest area, per year (average 1980-1990). About 270 million ha. of African lands (some 11 per cent of the total land area) is at least moderately damaged by water or wind erosion. This damage, combined with the progressive depletion of much arable land in Africa through continued cropping with little or no replenishment of plant nutrients, has resulted in a loss of land productivity and contributed to widespread poverty and food insecurity.

167. Since large areas in all sub-regions of Africa, except the centre, have an arid, semi-arid or dry subhumid climate, desertification is a threat to food security and sustainable livelihoods. In this respect, implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification is of prime importance to Africa. African countries, the OAU and sub-regional organizations played a key role during the negotiations leading up to its adoption in June 1994. To date, 100 countries have signed the Convention. In recognition of the importance of the Convention to Africa's development, a resolution on urgent action is operative, to allow for early implementation of the Convention in this region, prior to its entry into force.

168. In Resolution AHG/Res.245(XXXII) of June 1995 on the environment, African heads of state and government urged member states to get more involved in the struggle to protect the environment and natural resources of Africa, particularly within the framework of international institutions, and invited member states who have not yet signed and ratified the legal instruments emanating from the Rio Conference, and more particularly the Convention to Combat Desertification, to do so as concrete proof of Africa's high interest in the issue. The resolution commends the efforts of the international community aimed at the implementation of the Rio Conference and urges it to continue to extend its valuable financial support to Africa for the implementation of these decisions at continental level.

169. African countries have understood that desertification is both a cause and a consequence of poverty, and regard the Convention as an important international instrument to achieve their objectives of sustainable development. African governments have requested the support of the donor community and United Nations agencies in financial, technical and advisory services. In view of the priority given to Africa in the Convention, the Secretary-General intends to provide support for its implementation.

170. In implementing the Convention, there are two main areas which would provide promising entry points for collaborative action by UN agencies: fostering the preparation of National Action Programmes (in which the experience of agencies would be useful, a point of the June 1996 forum being organized by IFAD and the Interim Secretariat of the Convention); and working out the Global Mechanism "promoting actions leading to the mobilization and channeling of substantial financial resources to affected developing country parties."

171. Key areas under this component of the Initiative are to include the following:

- *Promote and support the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention. The Initiative in this respect will: (i) sensitize and secure commitments from the international community to support the development and implementation of national and sub-regional action programmes to combat desertification; (ii) help establish the partnership mechanisms and compacts between African countries and developed country parties; (iii) assist in formulating and establishing innovative mechanisms to channel resources to strengthen the efforts of local communities in countries affected by drought and desertification; (iv) promote and negotiate arrangements (including debt conversion and debt-for-nature swaps) that will increase the availability of resources to support implementation of the Convention; and (v) establish a consortium of key UN agencies and multilateral financial institutions for the purpose of identifying and gaining consensus on ways of making the Global Mechanisms as effective as possible, harmonizing their inputs through development of more joint programming and collectively supporting the efforts of African countries and their inter-governmental organizations in the field of desertification control and drought mitigation;*
- *Promote participatory technology development involving land users, CBOs and NGOs to find solutions to land management problems. Correspondingly, the Initiative will also promote the adoption, on a wide scale, of low cost and effective technologies for water harvesting and soil and water conservation, building on improved versions of traditional systems, and facilitate the identification of relevant technologies, knowledge, know-how and practices from other regions to solve existing constraints (as inherent in the Fair Share Approach referred to in paras. 185-7, below); and*
- *Support the establishment of an African Science and Technology Council networking mechanism involving African scientific and research institutions concerned with natural resource management issues. The aim is to secure and develop state-of-the-art work of concerned African institutions to support the Convention implementation and contribute, in particular, to the global work of science and technology to be set up under the Convention.*

172. A budget of $20 million is envisaged for this three-year activity.

b. Soil Quality Improvement

173. While the measures to reduce land degradation and desertification are aimed mainly at halting the deterioration in the status of food security in the areas affected, there are others that could be used as a part of proactive strategies to enhance food security. In this respect, promoting better soil quality management practices, through plant nutrition management and fertilizer use, are of great importance in achieving sustainable increases in food and agricultural productivity and production. Indeed, by 2010, a substantial increase in cereal and tuber yields is required in sub-Saharan Africa in order to improve the availability of food for the increasing population. Currently the crop yields achieved are well below those that could be possible. In order to achieve those levels, however, the average available annual growth rate of the bulk of plant nutrients within the biomass of food crops should be close to 3.5 per cent. For the time being, the growth of the quantity of plant nutrients involved in the cropping systems is based on the mining of soil reserves and the plant nutrients stored in natural vegetation. The present contribution of mineral fertilizer to the supply of plant nutrients to the crops is extremely limited (less than 14 kg of nutrients/ha. of arable land for all countries). While organic sources of nutrients will play an essential role, nutrient depletion of soils in sub-Saharan Africa requires an increase in consumption of mineral fertilizers as a prerequisite for the increase of crop production to partially satisfy the forecasted requirements.

174. Mineral fertilizers are imported in most African countries at high cost. Infrastructure is poor and distribution is ineffective, which results in high distribution costs; and rural credit is scarce. Furthermore, farmers have a very limited financial ability to purchase inputs. Such major constraints deter farmers from the required intensification of their cropping systems through an agronomically sound and economically profitable use of mineral fertilizers.

175. The key component of this priority, therefore, is the promotion of actions on plant nutrition and related improvements in soil conditions through the increased use of fertilizer, where feasible. The priority will address issues of high prices of manufactured fertilizers, insufficient and ineffective use of on-farm fertilizers, and aversion by farmers to the risks associated with food crop production in difficult agro-climatic and socio-economic conditions. Pilot cross-sectoral investments will be undertaken in three countries to strengthen the availability at

reasonable price and delivery of fertilizers and to carry out a promotion strategy.

176. A one-year planning period costing $450,000 will be undertaken after which a full programme will be submitted for endorsement by the Steering Committee.

c. Food security with special emphasis on Women

177. African women produce up to 80 per cent of the total food supply. Apart from producing food, women handle, process and store food as well as manage soil and water, and play a leading role in trade, marketing and cash crop production.

178. Despite this contribution to the national economy and household food security, women have remained largely marginalized in terms of access to education and training, health, credit, technology, information and land, as well as participation in the political and economic decision-making processes. They have often benefitted very little from development activities related to food security. Against this background, women have exploited natural resources in ecologically vulnerable areas using traditional low-yield inputs which have resulted in low productivity and environmental degradation of a first-generation variety even though they may possess the knowledge to protect the environment. The conditions of women have deteriorated due to the erosion of financial bases and social services.

179. African governments and the donor community have recognized that strengthening women's potential for the management of food can improve food security at the household level and, in turn, at the national level. In a similar vein, empowering women can contribute significantly to the management and enhancement of the natural resource base. To this end, governments with the support of the donor community have embarked on policy reforms (land reform, banking polices, and other economic and socio-cultural dynamics) and reforms of the legal system (property rights, asset-holding, transfer of ownership, and customary laws). Institutions responsible for gender issues have been established and/or strengthened to formulate policy in economic, social and legal matters in order to remove obstacles to women's empowerment.

180. Yet, the majority of African women continue to be disadvantaged. This is mostly the result of ambiguous constitutions which allow a dual system of statutory and customary law. In some cases, where statutory law has been reformed in favour of women, customary law has prevailed. In customary law, land is normally allocated only to men and women are regarded as legal minors, under the custody of their husbands or their male relatives. As a consequence, women do not own land which is used as collateral to obtain loans to buy high-value inputs for increased agricultural productivity and, in turn, improved incomes. Women have therefore remained poor. To improve the condition of women as food producers and protectors of the environment, the current legal restrictions must be removed.

181. The Special Initiative will support government efforts to reform the laws that have facilitated the subordination of women. Activities will focus on reviewing existing laws and practices and how they have disadvantaged women, and the support of efforts aimed at the enactment of laws and changes of practices to empower women regarding land ownership, access to credit, technology, extension services, etc., all of them designed to improve their productivity, incomes and, in turn, eradicate their poverty which has been the cause and consequence of food insecurity and environmental degradation.

182. The priority will be planned and budgeted prior to submission to the Steering Committee for endorsement.

II. Assuring Sustainable Use of and Equitable Access to Freshwater

183. The UN is in an excellent position to understand the importance of water in Africa's future. Not only is water basic to sustain life (and is thus basic to food security, health, sanitation and hygiene), but it has the potential of being a prime cause of civic and international instability in the next century. Bridging concerns of peace and development, the UN may well have a comparative advantage in helping Africa's poor peoples and its states to better assure sustainable and equitable water supplies and their use, particularly at household levels.

184. The Earth Summit and Agenda 21 address many of the scientific and technical considerations for achieving the goal of equitable access and sustainable use of water resources. Agenda 21 also provides a new basis for reconciling development and environment. However, a third crucial element must be emphasized in addition to Agenda 21's major focus on "environment" and "development." That element is equity.

185. As a key priority of the Initiative, it is intended that the United Nations should play a lead and supporting role in ensuring more equitable and sustainable use of water in Africa, with

attention given to the poor majority. The top priority within this effort should be to ensure a basic quantity of safe water for African citizens, and thereby promoting water equity. This "Fair Share" approach advocates water equity across major water uses and users, in national economic development plans, and between countries using shared water resources. The overall goal is to ensure reasonable access – a fair share – at affordable prices for water for the poor majority of people throughout Africa.

186. The question of equity extends to assuring a fair sharing of the use of internationally shared water resources. There are more than 50 international drainage basins in Africa, but few international agreements exist on their use and the protection of water resources in them. Recently, the UN has been helpful in promoting water-sharing agreements. This facilitating role is envisioned to be widely replicated in the following priority.

187. The programme, while including technological components, focuses primarily on changes in water policies, laws and institutions, in order to ensure that the poor majority of the people in Africa are brought from the margins of the issue to the front of a coherent and sustainable water development agenda. The programme applying the "Fair Share" approach has five key elements:

1) Assessing all future national and international water policies, plans and programmes in terms of their economic viability, environmental sustainability and equity impacts. If the review indicates the policies, plans and programmes do not lead to at least some improvement in the living conditions and prospects of the poor majority, then a sustainable alternative must be found that does.

2) Assisting governments to incorporate the "Fair Share" approach in their national water development policies, plans and programmes. The same approach should also be built into and applied to internationally shared water resources. In both cases, the active involvement of local communities and peoples in water management planning and decision-making must be secured.

To implement the above two programme elements would involve: a focus first on countries in East and southern Africa with results brought to other areas of Africa, in concert with UNEP, UNDP, FAO, the World Bank and other UN agencies as appropriate; and second, on related additions to current activities.

3) Assisting governments in implementing the "Fair Share" approach, and in disseminating practical and affordable techniques which can help the majority of people get access to clean water in the shortest possible time. In addition to some large-scale projects, what is now needed is fostering a great many small-scale projects based on community planning and management (e.g., hand-dug wells vs. high-tech boreholes, water tanks, rainwater harvesting, etc.). A series of initiatives to develop and propagate low-cost technologies are proposed along with a number of ongoing activities. UN agency involvement would include UNDP, UNICEF, UNEP, FAO, UNIDO, WHO and WMO in partnership with ECA and SADC.

4) Accelerating relevant components of existing projects to emphasize and demonstrate application of the "Fair Share" approach (e.g., Zambezi Action Plan) and the advantages of community participation in water management planning and decision-making. This would involve consultations over the next few years and expanded work, basin-by-basin, in 1998-9. Key participating UN agencies would be UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank in partnership with SADC, NORAD, SIDA and DANIDA. The cost would depend upon the number of basins involved.

5) Assisting governments to set up more effective drainage basin and regional agreements and institutions for avoiding or settling conflicts over equitable access and use of water resources. The approach here would be workshops on conflict resolution, preparation of an African Guidelines and/or Charter on the Equitable and Sustainable Use of Shared Water Resources, and establishment of a panel of legal experts to advise and assist countries through the peaceful settlement of water disputes via mediation, conciliation and arbitration of disputes. This will involve the UN Secretariat, UNDP, UNEP, World Bank, FAO, ECA, SADC and relevant NGOs.

188. The estimated cost for preliminary studies and preparatory work on this priority area is $2 million.

12. Household Water Security

189. The Special Initiative includes the mobilization of approximately $2.5 billion in external resources and $4.5 billion in internal resources over the next decade to expand water and sanitation services in Africa.

190. Recognizing the serious deteriorating conditions of household water security, which includes household drinking water and sanitation, and taking note of the priority given to this sector by African countries as well as the initiatives by WHO, UNICEF and the World Bank/UNDP programmes, the ACC decides to include in the Special Initiative on Africa an item for Household Water Security which will be implemented through existing mechanisms of the Special Initiative.

191. This endeavour is aimed at enabling as many African countries as possible to provide access for at least 80 per cent of their population to safe water supply and sanitation in the next decade or earlier. This activity will require approximately $700 million a year, two-thirds of which can be generated internally, over and above the present estimated expenditure of about $1.3 billion a year in the water supply and sanitation sector in urban and rural areas of Africa. The necessary resources are possible to be mobilized through a combination of increased donor assistance, debt swap and national budget restructuring.

192. The goal can be realized through the development of national plans of action, targeting the populations in greatest need and with external support for capacity building and monitoring. In this process, the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programming (JMP) which has been endorsed in the Secretary General's Report to ECOSOC, will be strengthened throughout Africa. At the country level, a compact of donors and the respective governments can be developed and a taskforce will be formed consisting of involved UN agencies and donors in collaboration with national governments, to make an effort to raise an additional $700 million a year for this activity, including approximately $250 million a year from external sources.

193. Implementation and a more detailed budget planning will proceed, after which the lead agencies (UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, World Bank) will present to the Steering Committee a plan to carry out this priority. UNESCO will also be a part of this activity.

13. Freshwater Assessments

194. The following element, submitted by WMO, will be implemented as a part of the Special Initiative's approach to water development and security in Africa.

195. The basis of resolving issues of equity and "fair sharing" of water is the accurate knowledge of the quantity and quality of freshwater in relation to the present and future demands. Thus, a water resources assessment constitutes a prerequisite for all cross-sectoral development purposes of a country's water resources, and consequently was included in Programme Area B of Chapter 18, AGENDA 21 - Water Resources Assessment. To assist activities of African countries, an initiative specifically targeted to this field was developed by heads of the national water development agencies in the form of an African Water Resources Assessment Programme - Policy, Strategy and Action Plan, in a conference in March 1995 (Addis Ababa). This initiative has been approved by the WMO Congress and the relevant African Council of Ministers, which is, therefore, a clear indication of the political commitment of the governments. To implement the programme, the two organizations have been requested to take the lead role in collaboration with the other UN agencies concerned.

196. In support of the above and with the assistance of the World Bank and the European Union, steps have already been taken in Africa by launching in 1995 activities under the umbrella of the regional political groups such as SADC and IGADD, as well as in North Africa to assess the water quantity and quality. This comprises among others the establishment of components of a World Hydrological Cycle Observing System (WHYCOS). The overall thrust of this initiative is to "break the dependency syndrome" by enabling the participation of little used but abundant local expertise to carry out the assessment of water resources at the national, shared river-basin and regional scales. This strategy takes into account the existing economic capacity of the countries, their commercial competitiveness and local manufacturing of at least the basic instruments and equipment. The underlying conviction of the countries is to do the maximum possible with the available internal human and financial resources. This positive attitude can be expected to generate the initiative and entrepreneurship, which are powerful driving forces for the development of indigenous technology, for capacity building and sustainability.

197. The initial cost for Africa for this priority is estimated as $20 million. These funds will be used to:

- *initiate or strengthen institutional arrangements and to generate political support within the regional economic-political groupings to undertake water resources assessment in shared river basins, and*
- *launch or support the new initiative of WMO and the World Bank to set up the Hydrological Cycle Observing Systems (HYCOS) in each of the sub-regions as a component of the World Hydrological Cycle Observing System (WHYCOS).*

198. Implementation and a more detailed budget planning will proceed with the lead agency proposing to the Steering Committee a plan to carry out this priority.

14. Water for Food Production

199. With water shortages recorded regularly in a growing number of countries in Africa, increased attention is needed on management of available water resources. Food production is dependent upon reliable supplies of water. Improved water management practices are particularly necessary as Africa turns, as it must, to more use of agricultural inputs and to utilizing on a more widespread basis the findings of agricultural research. As an integral part of the Special Initiative there will be concerted actions on the following five critical aspects of water for food production:

(i) Review and reform of national water resources development and irrigation policies and strategies, including water legislation and institutional reforms in such a manner that they are compatible with broader national development and agricultural policies. This will include provision of guidelines for policy reviews and strategy formulation, provision of technical expertise in formulating legal texts, organization of expert missions and national workshops, training national and regional core staff, and institutional strengthening.

(ii) Promoting establishment of national information and monitoring systems on natural resources development; formulation or updating of national irrigation and water use management master plans; and preparation of related investment programmes. This would be accomplished through development of methodologies for the establishment of data bases with guidelines and software, on-the-job training for monitoring, external and national private consulting firm technical assistance to support development of master plans and investment programmes, and external training.

(iii) Encouraging adoption of appropriate technologies, management practices, economic incentives and institutional measures to increase water use efficiency. This would be accomplished through networking among concerned institutions, technology development and assessment, dissemination of publications and guidelines, pilot projects for field testing and demonstration, developing and disseminating computer programmes and innovative management methods, assisting the formulation and implementation of water pricing policies, and encouraging transfer of water management responsibilities to farmers.

(iv) Fostering national capacity building to support irrigation development through training, strengthening of water user associations, and encouraging participatory approaches including active involvement of women. This would be implemented through provision of training manuals, conducting training programmes, seminars and workshops, and introducing innovative methods to encourage women's participation.

(v) Facilitating mobilization of necessary funds for implementing irrigation development programmes, both externally and within the country by developing new, innovative approaches with emphasis on private sector participation. The approach here would be through donor roundtables, public awareness campaigns, consultation with potential private sector investors, proposing an enabling environment (e.g., tax relief, investment guarantees, risk insurance), providing training programmes for the private sector, and holding workshops to identify constraints and to formulate solutions.

200. For each of these five components FAO has identified potential UN, regional and international partners. Within the UN family, partners in one or more of the five components of the project would be UNDP, the World Bank, ECA, IFAD, DDSMS, WFP and UNEP.

201. The estimated total budget is $25 million over the 1996-2000 period. Implementation and more detailed budget planning will proceed under FAO's leadership and FAO will then present to the Steering Committee a plan to carry out this priority.

Part III

MOBILIZING FOR AND IMPLEMENTING THE INITIATIVE

A. Partnership Innovations for More Effective Development Cooperation

202. In the course of their work, contributors to this exercise suggested a number of ways to better bring together donor roles in support of African development. Three implementing innovations are discussed below: establishing regional forums around specific development goals; the preparation of national investment programmes aimed at specific objectives or sectors; and, broadening participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtables. These have potential to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of donor support to African development, underscore the leadership of governments in defining their priorities, bring African governments and their partners together to work out modalities for the implementation and monitoring of these priorities, and enhance opportunities for mobilizing resources within agreed programmatic frameworks. Moreover, together these innovations would mark a new emphasis for the UN system, putting it in the lead of donor reform, with emphasis on mobilizing energies and resources around goal-driven national strategies and action plans.

1. Goal-Oriented Regional Forums

203. Multilateral and bilateral donors (with lead donors to be identified) are urged to create regional forums to mobilize funds for the larger development priorities facing Africa. It should be emphasized that the forums are to mobilize resources for Africa devoted to key sectors or inter-sectoral challenges, and to resolve important issues dividing donors or governments. Donors for African Education, the African Population Advisory Committee, and the Special Program for African Agricultural Research, should be used for this purpose in the relevant sectors. The forums would not take the place of individual country programmes, but would complement them. Interested private companies and NGOs should be invited in as appropriate. Efforts also might be made to attract foreign private funding from mutual funds and pension plans.

2. Preparation of Goal-Oriented Country Programmes

204. It is recommended that African governments and donors commit to preparing investment programmes for major strategic objectives in each African country, which are goal-oriented investment programmes. Donor support would be provided within the context of these programmes. Government would lead the preparation and the management of the programmes. Technical assistance agencies like UNDP would take the lead in helping to build national capacity for programme development and implementation. NGOs and the private sector would be invited to participate.

205. A key implication of this innovation would be that the cumulative direction and, hopefully, impact of donor assistance would be more focused and significant. It is assumed that creating these frameworks would increase the likelihood of joint donor activities and would thus reduce the number of donor projects, aiding management issues all around.

206. National sectoral and other programmes are not a new innovation, but having agreement among the UN family to actively cooperate in such programmes would be a significant sign of leadership in improving donor performance.

3. Broadening Participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtable Meetings

207. Two working groups suggested that there is an opportunity to broaden Consultative Group and Roundtable discussions to add breadth and more openness to the processes. One group suggests the addition of leading private sector companies; another suggests the addition of leading NGOs. These are complementary innovations where the substantive and symbolic stakes would be substantial. Detailed modalities have yet to be worked out.

B. Financial Implications of the Initiative

208. The cumulative financial resource implications of the various components presented in this paper are significant. In general, new or redirected resources should almost entirely be devoted to African national programmes. The exercise should contribute to the rationalization and redirection of existing UN resources as well as help to channel non-UN resources into critical priority areas of Africa's development.

209. Cost estimates have been calculated for the large components and most of the smaller ones. In total, there is an implication that both African national budgets and donor budgets should be realigned if these programmes, particularly the larger ones in education and health, are to move forward. In

terms of ODA, if the Special Initiative is fully implemented there would be a need to locate an average of around $2.4 billion/year out of reallocated or new resources. This would be the equivalent of 20 per cent of ODA to Africa. New financing and/or financial mechanisms must be found from other more economically advanced parts of the developing world (new donors) and especially from OECD countries. The priorities in this Initiative must be seen in light of their potential to garner a reallocation from existing levels of multilateral and bilateral ODA directed to Africa and of African national budgets.

210. A source of encouragement is the willingness of the World Bank to lead the financial mobilization of the education and health initiatives, and the readiness of other agencies to participate as partners on these initiatives. Similarly, other UN entities (such as UNDP and ECA) are committed to lead in the resourcing of other priorities. If these indications equally materialize, they would set an example of financial leadership vital to the success of the Initiative.

211. A summary of the tentative additional financial implications of the priorities of the Special Initiative is presented in Table 1 (see page 32).

212. The bulk of these resources would be mobilized and expended at the country level.

213. In addition to those priorities requiring financing there are others which require negligible or no additional funding to be carried out. These largely call for policy interventions in the external sector. A third component involves innovations in cooperation modalities (particularly regional and country forums) but may well have implications for institution building and strengthening at the country level and for additional kinds of analyses of development problems. On the other hand, donors should be able to save funds if more of their activities were directed to common goals in more synergistic ways.

C. Implementation of the Initiative

214. The activities of the Steering Committee, so far, have concentrated on forming plans and proposals for the Initiative. Initial consideration is being given to implementation modalities as well. Agencies are reminded that implementation plans and modalities should fully incorporate a gender perspective and that monitoring should differentiate outcomes by gender to assure equitable benefits from the Special Initiative.

1. Mobilization of Political Commitment and Support

215. The Special Initiative is planned to include generation of political commitment and support both among Africa's development partners and within Africa.

216. It has been agreed that a one-year campaign be undertaken to put forward the key emphases of the Initiative, i.e., that African development should be supported by the international community and that the U.N. is taking leadership in new ways to cooperate with Africa. This would permit a process of thorough consultation with African leaders. A one-year time span would also permit coverage of key political meetings (OAU, ECA Ministerial, G-77, Islamic Conference, etc.), bilateral discussions with key donors in the OECD and other areas, NGOs, and media.

217. At the October 1995 ACC meeting, heads of UN agencies confirmed their intention to bring the Special Initiative to the attention of their respective governing bodies, and to actively contribute to the campaign to mobilize political commitment and support, to ensure the effective implementation of the Initiative. Agency heads are also advised to bring the Special Initiative to the attention of their partners and constituencies.

218. The Steering Committee, working closely with DPI and public affairs centres throughout the UN system, will help promote the mobilization of political commitment and support during the whole of 1996.

2. Implementation Arrangements

219. Each of the priorities of the Special Initiative will have its own implementation and financing context depending upon the plans of lead agencies.

220. For most of the priorities, the critical context for programmes will be at the country level. This is consistent with the desire for Special Initiative efforts to be responsive to country desires and programme directions. It also responds to the desire of the ACC that the Special Initiative be focused on country-level action. The ACC session of October 1995 agreed that "above all, programmes under the Initiative should support policies and programmes decided on by the African countries themselves, and should be pursued as an integral part of a major effort by the system as a whole to generate greater political commitment for African development by the entire international community."

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PRIORITIES REQUIRING FUNDING

Priority	Annual Cost	Implementation Period	Total Cost
Equitable Access to Freshwater	$ 1 million	2 years	$ 2 million
Household Water Security	250 million	10 years	2.5 billion
Freshwater Assessments	4 million	5 years	20 million
Water for Food Security	5 million	5 years	25 million
Land Degradation	6.7 million	3 years	20 million
Soil Quality	0.45 million	1 year (design)	0.45 million
Food Security with special emphasis on women	n/a	n/a	n/a
Governance	100 million	5 years	500 million
Peace-OAU	20 million	5 years	100 million
Communications for Peace-building	1.56 million	5 years	7.8 million
Informatics	2.3 million	5 years	11.5 million
Civil Society	1.6 million	5 years	8 million
South-South Cooperation	2 million	5 years	10 million
Education	1.25-1.5 billion	10 years	12.5-15 billion
Health	650 million	10 years	6.5 billion
Poverty Reduction & Employment	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sustainable Livelihoods in Environmentally Marginal Areas	1.6 million	5 years	8 million
Total	***$ 2.296 - $ 2.546 bn***		***$ 22.212 - $24.712 bn***

221. A concomitant part of the country orientation of the Special Initiative will be to utilize UN Resident Coordinators. These coordinators will be asked to convey to African countries the intent and content of the Special Initiative. They will help organize country components of the Special Initiative in a way which has cumulative impact and which conveys to national leaders the special commitment of the United Nations system to the development of their states. This process should be particularly useful in linking the kinds of political decisions necessary in one part of the component with the decisions in another part (e.g. education and health), to give added coherence to the actions needed by countries and donors.

222. A summary of how the agencies plan to cooperate in the implementation of the Special Initiative is presented in Table 2 on page 34.

3. Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

223. The Steering Committee will work with the lead agencies on plans to monitor the implementation of the Special Initiative so that the ACC is assured that the approved efforts are being implemented and that there is additive impact from the combined work of agencies. Lead agencies will be responsible for identifying quantifiable goals for each component of the Special Initiative along with indicators to measure progress towards those goals. It has been suggested that child survival and development be important indicators of the overall success of the Initiative, child development being well represented and easily measurable as nutritional status of young children. Nutritional status reflects household access to food, household access to health services, water and sanitation, and the capacity of parents especially women to provide care of young children. These underlying determinants of nutritional status are affected positively by the absence of conflict, a lower burden of poverty, and improved status of women, all of which are priority goals.

224. It has been decided that the Initiative's Steering Committee remain active to continue shaping the planning of the Initiative and to be a focal point to stimulate implementation and to monitor this path-breaking exercise. Over the next year, the Steering Committee will assist the implementation of the various components of the Special Initiative by working with lead agencies as they launch their agreed programmes. In the case of components of the Special Initiative where it is recognized that implementation and budgetary planning work must be completed, the Steering Committee will review completed plans to assure that relevant parts of the UN system are represented and will also work, as appropriate, with lead agencies as they launch their work. Just as all members of the ACC were requested to participate in generating ideas for and in reviewing the work of the Steering Committee to bring the System-wide work to this point, so, too, are all interested members invited to participate in the future work of the Steering Committee. The work of the Steering Committee will be pursued in an open manner. Organizations not now on the Steering Committee and wishing to become members should notify the co-chairmen of the Steering Committee.

225. Recognizing the implementation plans approved by the ACC in its October 1995 sessions regarding system-wide task forces to coordinate implementation of actions at recent Summits and United Nations conferences, the Steering Committee will be prepared to respond to requests of task forces to report on actions of the Special Initiative having a particular relevance to the concerns of the respective task forces. This is a reporting function which will be fully respected. In addition, even though the Special Initiative is restricted to one geographic area while the task forces are global in coverage, it may be that experiences in the Special Initiative might provide experience useful to aspects of work of the task forces.

226. As is seen in III.B., above, most of the priorities are intended to be implemented in a 1-5 year period, but the three most complex and ambitious components are intended to be implemented over a 10-year period.

227. A report will be given the ACC at its first 1996 meeting on progress in launching the implementation of the Special Initiative. A second report to the ACC at its second 1996 meeting will update the activities of the Special Initiative and will discuss the future of coordination of the effort.

228. In any case, monitoring of the Special Initiative and periodic reporting to the ACC will continue during its duration. It would be appropriate for a full review to be produced at the end of the first five years of implementation with a final review at the end of a decade. To summarize the workplan:

- *Launch during the first quarter of 1996.*
- *Review of launch and first implementation report to ACC at its first 1996 meeting.*
- *Implementation report, review of work of the Steering Committee, and discussion of future coordination arrangements at the second 1996 meeting of the ACC.*
- *Annual reviews of implementation to be compiled by the Secretariat of the Special Initiative and successor arrangements, as approved by the ACC.*
- *Mid-Term Review of implementation of the whole Initiative at the first 2001 meeting of the ACC, and*
- *Final review of the Special Initiative and assessment of its final impact at the first 2006 meeting of the ACC.*

COOPERATION IN IMPLEMENTING THE SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON AFRICA

Priorities	Cooperating Agencies
1. Assuring Sustainable and Equitable Freshwater	*UNEP, UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, WORLD BANK, ECA, WHO, UNIDO, WMO, SADC, UNESCO
2. Household Water Security	*UNICEF, *WHO, *UNDP, *WORLD BANK,UNESCO
3. Freshwater Assessments	*WMO, UNESCO
4. Water for Food Production	*FAO, UNDP, WFP, ECA, WORLD BANK, IFAD, DDSMS, UNEP
5. Land Degradation and Desertification Control	*FAO, UNDP, IFAD, UNESCO, UNEP
6. Soil Quality Improvement	*FAO, UNESCO, UNIDO
7. Food Security with special emphasis on women	*FAO, WFP, UNIFEM, IFAD, UNICEF
8. Peace-building, Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation through:	
a. Strengthening OAU's Capacity for Peace-building	*UNDP, UNHCHR
b. Strengthening Civil Society for Peace-building	*ECA, *UNDP
c. Communications for Peace-building	*UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, FAO
9. Capacity Building for Governance	*UNDP, ECA, WORLD BANK, UNHCHR
10. Strengthening Civil Society for Development (including Peace-building)	*ECA, UNDP, UNESCO
11. Harnessing Information Technology for Development	*WORLD BANK,*ECA, UNESCO, UNCTAD, ITU, UNIDO
12. Partnership with Africa through South-South Cooperation	*ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, UNCTAD, DPCSD, UNESCO, UNIDO
13. Basic Education for All African Children	*WORLD BANK, *UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP
14. Health Sector Reform	*WORLD BANK,*WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA
15. Poverty Reduction through the Promotion of the Informal Sector and Employment Generating Opportunities	*ECA, *ILO, UNDP, DPCSD, WORLD BANK, UNIDO, UNESCO, IFAD, FAO, WFP
16. Sustainable Livelihoods in Environmentally Marginal Areas	*UNDP, *UNSO, FAO, WFP, IFAD
17. Substantial Debt Relief	*UNDP
18. Partnership Innovations for Effective Development Cooperation with:	
a. Goal-Oriented Regional Fora	*WORLD BANK, *UNDP
b. Use of Goal-Oriented Country Programmes	*WORLD BANK, *UNDP
c. Broadening Participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtables	*WORLD BANK, *UNDP
19. Trade Access and Opportunities	*UNDP, *WTO, UNIDO, FAO, ECA, WORLD BANK, ADB, UNDP, ITC, UNESCO
20. Internal Resource Mobilization	*WORLD BANK, ECA

Note: * — Lead Agency

Appendix:

PRIORITIES RECOMMENDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION BY INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UN SYSTEM

1. Presented in this Appendix are a series of extremely useful activities submitted by ACC members which are reinforcing of the Special Initiative, but are most suitable for implementation by proposing individual agencies and organizations of the system. It is hoped that these activities proceed in parallel with the Special Initiative.

A. Solar Energy

2. Noting that up to 75 per cent of rural populations in Africa have no access to public energy supplies, the need for advancement in renewable energy technologies, and a 20-year history of meetings on renewable energy, UNESCO has proposed that there be an African Solar Programme (1996-2005), "Solar Highway for Sustainable Development of Africa," to promote scientific and technological development in solar energy through a communication process and a highly focused campaign aiming at: enhancing understanding of the potential of solar energy; fostering of partnerships between NGOs and the official sector to share knowledge in this field; establishing a global information networking system on renewable energies; harmonizing cooperation in training and research; demonstrating cost-effective technologies; and identifying strategic projects in renewable energy sources of regional importance. An African Solar Council is being established in close partnership with OAU, ECA, UNEP, UNIDO, UNDP, UNESCO, World Bank, UNFPA, WHO and FAO. A World Solar Summit at the highest level of government will be organized in Harare, Zimbabwe, in September 1996.

3. The cost of a basic package of 40 priority projects is estimated at $80 million/year over a period of five years for which $400 million will have to be mobilized during that period. A joint inter-agency and country-selecting steering team is suggested to be led by UNESCO and comprising UN agencies, the World Bank, the European Commission, the International Energy Agency and governments in Africa. The experience of UNIDO, and the Center for Applied Solar Energy which it established with the Government of Australia, should be utilized in this effort.

B. Infrastructural Development

4. It is well-recognized that there are major infrastructural requirements in Africa to promote development and regional integration. Both maintenance of existing infrastructure and new investments are needed. ECA has responsibilities in helping to carry out regionally based decade-long programmes of action.

5. Due consideration needs to be given to the importance of transport in general and air transport in particular, for the urban and rural development in Africa, and for the promotion of social and economic cooperation within and outside the African region. In Africa, with a weak system of ground transportation and communication, air transport is often the only means of effective movement of persons, goods and services between states. Problems in these sectors need to be addressed and the International Civil Aviation Organization is a valued resource in helping to address such problems. Rural infrastructure requires particularly emphasis as it is vital to the agricultural development of the region. In this regard, stress needs to be placed on development of rural roads, air transportation into centres of importance to agriculture and port-handling facilities.

6. The International Maritime Organization has also usefully pointed out that development, in general, is closely linked to international trade, the largest proportion of which is moved by ships. Exports and imports require a sound transportation infrastructure which will ensure an efficient and cost-effective movement of goods. This means that a network of land-based facilities must be available and be linked to properly designed and managed ports so that ships can handle their portion of the system properly. To guarantee that these elements are in place and fit together requires a sound and well-structured maritime administration coupled with well-trained port operators and marine officers. To assist with the improvement or establishment of these elements vital to the movement of goods by sea, IMO emphasizes the importance of capacity building and can offer assistance to African countries for the training of maritime officers at the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden, and the training of maritime lawyers at the International Maritime Law Institute in Malta. In addition, IMO can provide help in the design and operation of ports and their infrastructure.

7. The ACC has agreed that attention to these issues is important. While no specific proposals have been submitted to the Steering Committee in this regard, agencies are encouraged to organize parallel efforts to strengthen African transport

infrastructure. The Special Initiative does include a priority on informatics which would strengthen Africa's communications infrastructure.

C. Small and Medium-scale Enterprise Development

8. It is agreed that enterprise development is important to Africa's economic future. The Special Initiative will organize as part of its efforts an initiative to enhance financial services for micro-enterprise. And, in its governance programmes, it will intensify efforts to assist states to better foster private sector development in the continent.

9. In addition, it has been suggested by UNIDO that one of the innovative ways in which UN organizations can intervene in support of entrepreneurship and enterprise development has been through EMPRETEC, an integrated programme sponsored by a number of agencies. Its purpose is to provide technical assistance and a national institutional base for the formation, expansion and internalization of small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) to enable them to move up from low to high value-added manufactures. The central objectives of the programme are: to improve the development prospects and outlook for job creation; to mobilize entrepreneurial resources; and to help SMEs to compete in increasingly liberalized and eco-conscious markets by assisting them to enhance their entrepreneurial drive, build their technological abilities, and become eco-efficient. UNCTAD in cooperation with DDSMS has responsibility for the programme.

10. EMPRETEC offers an integrated package of services for SMEs in the critical areas of trade, investment, technology, environmental management and human resource development. It aims to establish in each country a one-stop business support centre to access and provide high quality training, networking and management consultancy services for SMEs. It emphasizes the building of coalitions of public institutions, private business associations, national and foreign companies, and multilateral organizations.

11. The programme has three main modules. Under the financial module, in cooperation with local financial institutions, innovative financing arrangements are offered for emerging businesses, including special credit lines. The export module provides assistance in developing marketing skills, and promotion of products and services. Under the eco-management module SMEs are enabled to undertake the first steps in environmental management technologies.

12. If this programme is included in the Initiative, a special effort will be made to implement it widely in Africa.

D. Civil Society Empowerment for Poverty Reduction

13. The programme is aimed at the empowerment of civil society in sub-Saharan Africa by contributing to the emergence, development and production, by grassroots groups and NGOs, of visions, policies, strategies and participatory approaches to development by contributing to the establishment of an institutional and legislative environment at the national level that will promote sustainable upstream dialogue between civil society and national decision-makers.

14. The programme will be implemented through three complementary components: (a) a trend observation component; (b) an exchange component aimed at peasant organizations and women's organizations; and (c) an awareness/training component for decision-makers in governments, cooperation agencies and communicators from media organizations. Over 100 grassroots organizations will be empowered to define their agenda, their priorities, and to improve both the "micro and macro" dimensions of development. Over 1,350 agencies and civil society will be involved in dialogues aimed at devising concrete measures for combatting poverty. Included will be employers' and workers' organizations aimed at broad-based participation in the development process. The latter groups are making headway into the private and non-formal sectors of African economies and help provide ways for greater participation of peoples in decision-making.

15. The programme will be implemented in each of the three sub-regions of Africa by African institutions. Overall coordination will be assured by an institution such as the ECA.

16. The overall cost of this programme is $5.1 million over a five-year period, of which UNDP will provide $2.4 million.

E. Enhancing Postal Administration in the Least Developed African Countries

17. Noting that postal services are one of the key parts of the social, economic and cultural infrastructure, especially in developing countries, the Universal Postal Union has focused on enhancing human resource development in the operation of postal services in the least developed countries. For a three-year project (1996-1999), the first year of this programme is estimated to cost about $165,000. In addition, the UPU's Council of Administration has approved technical assistance priorities for the African continent for the period 1996-2010.

18. The Council of Administration also approved technical assistance priorities for the African continent for the period 1996-2000 covering the following areas: quality of service, international accounting system, commercial strategies and marketing, modernization of postal structures, modernization and expansion of postal financial services, and human resources development. Of these priority areas, the more pressing ones are modernization of postal financial services and implementation of substantive structural reform of the postal sector in order to make it economically viable. The basic aim is to enhance the contribution of postal services to the economic and social development of the African people.

19. The UPU's Council of Administration also endorsed as priority areas requiring technical assistance, five regional postal projects. These projects are the improvement of mail security, the creation or strengthening of regional and subregional postal transit centres, the implementation of modular training systems in country and inter-country schools, the setting up of independent postal corporations and the creation of workshops for the manufacture of postal material and equipment.

20. Furthermore, UPU, noting that communications facilities in rural areas in Africa where 80 per cent of people live are almost non-existent, is very much concerned about the situation and would like to provide postal services in the areas. However, such services would not be economically viable. The same situation applies to other communications facilities and infrastructures. It is thought that grouping them together so that all of them are provided from one central infrastructure "multi-purpose centre" would render them viable. The UPU, in collaboration with other organizations of the UN system, is heading a study on the matter.

F. Drought Preparedness and Mitigation

21. Drought, as a recurrent feature in Africa has had, and continues to have, devastating consequences. The threat has widened in scope with many more countries and populations affected than previously. Coupled with increased poverty, the vulnerability of rural households, particularly single parent households (the great majority of which are headed by women), has also increased. The urban poor are also being increasingly subjected to its effects through drought-induced shocks to the food system in terms of higher food prices.

22. Significant efforts have been undertaken by African subregional organizations to mitigate the effects of drought. At the continental level, the OAU has established a fund to assist its member states to cope with the effects of drought. Drought monitoring centres have been established in Eastern and Southern Africa. However, effective action continues to be hampered by constraints at several levels:

- *policy: lack of clearly articulated national policies which favors the continuation of relief and food aid over proactive contingency planning. With a few exceptions, drought contingency planning, apart from support to early warning systems, does not figure in development planning processes in even some of the most drought-prone countries. In many of them, planning efforts are usually abandoned as soon as normal rains resume, with the result that when drought strikes again, no effective policies or instruments are in place to adequately cope with its impact;*
- *institutional: over-centralization of planning and management of resources at the national level, resulting in weak capacities at sub-national level. Coupled with the tendency of most bilateral agencies and international NGOs to build parallel institutional structures to handle relief and mitigation efforts (understandably driven by humanitarian concerns to save lives), this has contributed to inhibiting the development of indigenous African capacity to plan, coordinate and implement proactive drought response strategies; and*
- *inefficient use of early warning information for timely responses, related to political sensitivity by national authorities. Most early warning systems (EWS) are also oriented to supply information for the purpose of relief, as opposed to mitigation and contingency planning. Consequently, institutional mechanisms for EWS have usually been located at the national, macro-level. However, due to the regionalization and decentralization processes occurring in many countries in SSA, the frequent occurrences of devastating droughts in specific localities, and the need to situate decision-making processes closer to where the impact of drought is being felt, it is important to build decentralized EWS, so that communities and regional authorities can systematically collect, analyze relevant data and information and formulate response strategies, with support from central government.*

23. In view of the above, support to African countries, to assist them to develop more effective and proactive drought mitigation and preparedness capabilities, should be furnished in three substantive areas:

i) Providing assistance to develop Drought Policy Frameworks, which should address issues such as: national food reserves/security stocks, pre-positioning of resources, the nature, type and extent of safety nets to put in place, and identification of beneficiary groups and gender issues within groups to improve targeting; resources to be committed by government both in

active contingency planning processes and in response mechanisms in times of crises; the roles and responsibilities of different line ministries and national, sub-national, local authorities, as well as private and external agencies.

ii) Providing assistance to strengthen institutional capacity at sub-national level and designing flexible response options for coping with drought. Key emphasis needs to be placed on: building capacity at regional and local levels to undertake contingency planning and to organize timely and effective responses; support for decentralized early warning systems, and drought management schemes; promotion and support for alternative livelihood systems to provide incomes in drought prone areas; development of drought-resistant crop varieties and species.

iii) Support to regional and sub-regional organizations, particularly in terms of: promoting agreements on cross-border issues such as refugees, movement of people and livestock, trade in cereals and other collective endeavor in the event of widespread and generalized droughts; promotion of joint exploitation of trans-boundary resources e.g., water for drought-proofing; cooperation to handle effects related to droughts such as pests, human and livestock health problems; and development of early warning and drought prediction capability at sub-regional and regional level.

24. Both UNSO and WFP have expressed particular interest in working towards the above approach.

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United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services (DDSMS)

United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD)

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO)

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

World Bank

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